



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
LIMITED

E/ECA/ATRCW/RCIWD.4/2
11 August 1989

Original: ENGLISH

Fourth Regional Conference on the
Integration of Women in Development
on the Implementation of the Arusha
Strategies for the Advancement of
Women in Africa

6-10 November 1989
Abuja, the Federal Republic of Nigeria

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Opening Ceremony (Agenda item 1)

The Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development on the Implementation of the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa will be chaired by the out-going President of the Third Regional Conference, Minister from Tanzania and will open on Monday, 18 September 1989 at 10:00 a.m. His Excellency President Ibrahim Babangida, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria will open the Conference.

Statements will follow by:

- (a) Professor Adebayo Adedeji, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- (b) Dr. Margaret Anstee, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
- (c) Out-going President of the Third Regional Conference , Minister from Tanzania.

2. Election of Officers (Agenda item 2)

The Conference will elect its new President, five vice-presidents representing the different regions and two rapporteurs.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (Agenda item 3)

The proposed provisional agenda which contains 13 items and the draft programme of work with the dates and hours each day for discussion of the items will be presented to the conference for adoption.

4. Implementation of the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa beyond the end of the United Nations Decade for Women: Country perspectives (Agenda item 4)

Member States of ECA are expected to give an up-date on the implementation of the Arusha Strategies following the guidelines sent by ECA for the preparation of the report. Country reports should be specific and relevant focussing on issues highlighted by the guidelines which have indicated the priority areas of the Arusha Strategies. Priority areas for the future are expected to be highlighted by the participants.

5. Implementation of the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa Beyond the end of the United Nations Decade for Women: Regional Perspective (Agenda item 5)

A regional perspective on the implementation of the Arusha Strategies will be given by ECA. The paper will highlight the sectors that have made progress and consider the impact of the economic crisis on African women. Efforts made by UN agencies to promote the welfare of women will also be given. Recommendations for the future will be proposed in the Abuja Declaration entitled "Participatory Development the Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s. Within the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies the Abuja Declaration will give emphasis to areas that have emerged as crucial to the advancement of women.

6. Strategies for improving women's access to education and training in science and technologies (Agenda item 6)

The ECA paper will review, analyse and assess progress women in Africa have made since the UN Decade for Women in entering into science/technology-based training programmes and into the scientific professions. It will provide policy issues, guidelines and strategies needed for improving women's access to education and training in science and technology.

7. Improving African women's role in informal sector: Employment - Development (Agenda item 7)

African economies are characterized by a more or less embryonic informal sector and rapidly changing rural sector. Their convergence in urban and surrounding areas, is the development of an informal socio economic sector, which is difficult to define and in which women play an important role. The involvement of African women in the informal sector is seen as an appropriate solution to the serious problem of women's employment. At a time when national structural adjustment strategies are being developed, it is important to find that how certain socio-economic sectors such as agriculture, industry, commerce and handicrafts can generate informal activities capable of supporting a national self-reliant and self-sustained development strategy including women.

8. Flow of resources to women in the context of the African Food and Debt Crisis (Agenda item 8)

Despite the amount of resources available for African development, the continent still dwells on an unfavourable economic situation. This situation manifests itself on various dimensions: Most notably on the food and debt crisis, wherein women are the most affected.

The purpose of the study is to create understanding of the present situation of resources in view to increasing the ability of women in development machineries to attract additional resources and improve management capabilities on the utilisation of these resources.

9. The situation of displaced women and children under apartheid, drought, desertifications (Agenda item 9)

The effect of apartheid have been felt not only in South Africa and Namibia but also in the front line states and in other countries to which women have been displaced or sought refuge. The Arusha Strategies had recommended a number of steps to be taken at national, regional and multinational levels. The OAU paper will discuss the extent the measures have been implemented and recommend action for the future.

10. Special programme: Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC)

During the Conference, a special programme is planned to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee on the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC). This committee composed of 15 member States representing all subregions was established by the ECA Conference of Ministers in its resolution 365 in Rabat, Morocco in 1979 to monitor and coordinate activities in the region designed to promote the advancement of women. The list of members are as follows:

Niamey MULPOC

Chairperson	Ghana
Vice-Chairperson	Mauritania
Rapporteur	Benin

Yacunde MULPOC

Chairperson	Guinea Equatorial
Vice-Chairperson	Tchad
Rapporteur	Cameroun

Lusaka MULPOC

Chairperson	Zimbabwe
Vice-Chairperson	Comoros
Rapporteur	Kenya

Tangier MULPOC

Chairperson	Tunisia
Vice-Chairperson	Egypt
Rapporteurs	Morocco

Gisenyi MULPOC

Chairperson	Rwanda
Vice-Chairperson	Zaire
Rapporteur	Burundi

Bureau Members

Chairperson	Ghana
Vice-Chairperson	Tunisia
2nd Vice-Chairperson	Zimbabwe
Rapporteur	Rwanda
2nd Rapporteur	Guinea-Equatorial

11. Any other business

Delegates to the conference may wish to raise some additional issues related to the meeting.

12. Adoption of the report

The Rapporteur of the Conference will present the draft report of the conference for adoption.

13. Closing ceremony of the Conference

A special programme for the closing of the conference will be distributed to conference participants.



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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr. : LIMITED

E/ECA/ATRCW/RCIWD.4/3

5 September 1989

Original : ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration
of Women in Development on the Implementation
of the Arusha Strategies on the Advancement
of Women in Africa

6-10 November 1989

Abuja (Nigeria)

REPORT TO
THE FOURTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN
IN DEVELOPMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARUSHA
STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN
AFRICA: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

LC/NAR/1989

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. The result of the thrust given by the United Nations to activities concerned with the advancement of women through the declaration of first, the International Women's Year (1975), then the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) was a wealth of studies, research and actions. These activities achieved considerable awareness on women issues and established structures and connections with almost all contemporary problems, producing a vast spectrum of perspectives, viewpoints, orientations and objectives.

2. At the end of the Decade for women, the Nairobi World Conference on Women reviewed the achievements and problems encountered during the Decade. A series of concrete measures embraced in a package called the "Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (NFLS)" were adopted. The adoption of the NFLS by the 1985 World Conference endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 44/103 of 13 December 1985 was a major milestone in this ongoing process. The Strategies are based on the three objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women, namely: Equality, Development and Peace; and on the premise that these objectives are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

3. Guided by the global strategies and the numerous United Nations resolutions on women concerns, the situation of women in the Africa region has been since the beginning of the 1970s the subject of assessments. Several months before the World Conference (1985) and the adoption of the NFLS, an African Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women's Equality, Development and Peace was held in Arusha, Tanzania in October 1984. The Regional Preparatory Conference was organized jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and adopted strategies entitled the "Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of African Women Beyond the United Nations Decade for Women".

4. Calling on governments to take immediate action, the Conference adopted a resolution entitled "Implementation of the Arusha Strategies for African Women"¹. Paragraph two of that resolution requested all African Governments to take appropriate steps to harmonize their national development plans with the objectives and integrated approach of the Arusha Strategies. The Strategies were also considered by the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1985. Resolution 535 (XX) on Women and Development in Africa adopted on 19 April 1985 by the Conference of Ministers at its eleventh meeting, paragraph 4 reads: The Conference of Ministers "Adopts the Report of the Third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development and requests Governments and the institutions concerned to begin:

¹ Report of the Regional Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace/Third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development. DCC E/ECA/RC/WD/OAU/14 Arusha, Tanzania 27 October, 1984

to apply the Arusha Strategies on the Advancement of Women in Africa beyond the United Nations Decade for Women contained in that report".²

5. The major objectives of the Arusha Strategies are incorporated in the NFES and they complement each other in several areas in the concerns expressed and actions recommended for solving some of the issues pertaining to women. The Arusha Strategies, however, serve as guidelines for Africa in planning for the full integration of Women in Development giving attention to: agriculture and food production, impact of desertification, health, education and human resources development, industry and environment.

6. Following the adoption of the Arusha Strategies as well as Resolution 535 by the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1985, policies and programmes to translate the Strategies into actions were required. In casting our eyes backwards over the past (nearly) five years, it is necessary to review and reflect upon programmes which have been initiated to implement the Strategies, to systematize the knowledge which has been acquired and to develop a more precise commitment to action and strategies.

7. The objective of this report is therefore to review the activities undertaken and being initiated to implement the strategies and achievements attained mainly for the period 1984-1989. The review is based on information that has been received from: member states, UN agencies and organizations in reply to the ECA questionnaire/request; various reports on women in development; and ECA publications. Policy issues, objectives, approaches and long term perspectives of the participating governments and organizations are examined and identified trends noted. Sectoral analysis of activities undertaken by governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and institutions is given, while problems and constraints experienced in the implementation of the strategies are highlighted.

8. Part II of this review presents a conceptual framework of the long-term objectives of the Strategies namely: Equality, Development and Peace. Part III reviews activities undertaken and being initiated by governments and by sectors in line with the Strategies. Part IV reviews issues pertaining to Law and Legislation, while Parts V, VI, and VII respectively, review the role of NGOs/institutions; The African Training and Research Centre for Women and its regional and subregional structures; and UN agencies in the implementation of the Strategies. It is to be noted that the report contains information from UN Agencies/Organizations who sent and whose information was received by ATRCW in time before the report was finalized. Part VIII draws conclusions and advances recommendations for consideration by governments and organizations.

² Economic Commission for Africa Annual Report 29 May 1984 - 29 April 1985: Economic and Social Council Official Records, 1985 Supplement No. 15 United Nations.

II. EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

A. Equality

9. The Arusha Strategies referred societal definitions of status, sex roles and relative social standing of women vis-a-vis men as the ideological or attitudinal obstacles to equality.³ The lack of recognition of and hence the lack of appropriate services to alleviate the constraints placed upon women's productive functions, be their nurturant roles, are major constraints to equality. The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies defined equality in economic and social participation. Participation in the economic and social spheres of life means the contribution made by individuals to any economic and social activity, the benefits they receive from it and their involvement at the decision-making level, as full members of society.⁴ Hence, full equality of women and their free access to all areas of development, as active agents and beneficiaries, and to all types of education, training and employment should be promoted. Governments and organizations should take measures to ensure the right of women and men to employment on equal conditions and their equal access to the whole range of economic activities.

10. Progress in achieving equality in economic and social participation, as set out and recommended in both the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies is highly uneven. This report gives attention to selected areas in the economic and social spheres of life that are of particular relevance to women and equality.

B. Development

11. Development as one of the long-term objectives of the Arusha/Nairobi Strategies has to be considered in the context of African Development. The ultimate goal of development in Africa is to ensure the overall well-being of the people through sustained improvement in their living standards.⁵ It is predicated that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation.⁶ Women's development as outlined in the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year drawn up in 1975, is an integral part of economic, social and political development in Africa.

³ UNECA/OAU, the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa Beyond the End of the United Nations Decade for Women. Addis Ababa, UNECA June 1985.

⁴ Report of the Secretary-General E/CN.6/1989/5.

⁵ African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation. (AAF-SAP) E/ECA/CM.15/6 Rev. 3 April 1989.

⁶ Ibid.

12. Africa's development is inextricably linked with the development of women as they constitute that crucial other leg needed to enable Africa to walk and develop fully. As stated by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere⁷ "... Just as women's development in Africa is dependent upon national economic development, so national economic development is dependent upon the women of Africa and cannot easily take place without them. A person does not walk very far or very fast on one leg; how can we expect half of the people to be able to develop a nation? Yet the reality is that women are usually left aside when development needs are discussed, and also when the methods of implementation are being decided upon..."

13. Women's development is thus not an easy process. It is many sided. It involves the productive utilization of natural resources and human talents to improve the well-being of people. It seeks to provide sufficient nutritious food, wise exploitation and conservation of natural resources, safe water and adequate sanitation, reliable and affordable energy, decent housing, readily available health care, facilities for education and training, transport and communication services; opportunities for employment and regular income. A better quality of life for all human beings is its ultimate goal.

14. In the light of the above, it was to improve the socio-economic conditions of the women in Africa in the development process that the African governments adopted the Arusha Strategies to serve as guidelines for Africa in planning the full integration of women in development.

C. Peace

15. Peace is closely linked to equality and development. Development cannot be achieved without peace and equality. Colonialism, racism, aggression, repression, apartheid, gross violation of human rights, discrimination on the basis of sex, among others, are major obstacles to human progress specifically to the advancement of women.⁸

16. Universal peace cannot be attained without the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of development and particularly in decision-making concerning peace. Women have played and continue to play a major role in the liberation struggles of Africa, to liberate all the African people as a whole from poverty, ignorance, disease, exploitation and oppression. Yet the emancipation of the African women on the continent still remains a pipe-dream because of the colonial, traditional domination and other socio-cultural obstacles which continue to be practised to the disadvantage of women.

17. The Adoption of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies in 1984 and 1985 respectively, in the area of peace demonstrated that much more still needs to be

⁷ UNECA/OAU, The Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa, Addis Ababa, UNECA, 1985.

⁸ Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. United Nations April 1986.

done towards strengthening peace and security for development at the national, regional and global levels.

18. Having considered Equality, Development and Peace as the three long-term objectives of the Strategies for the Advancement of women, we now give attention to the progress review and appraisal of the implementation of the strategies by which Equality and Development in particular are reflected through out the report.

III. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS SECTORS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PROGRESS REVIEW

A. Education and Training

19. Education is a major factor in the modern economy that determines the level of participation of women in the various sectors of the economy. The modern economy demands that an individual has a certain level of education to obtain a reasonably well-paid occupation or to effectively take advantage of the various economic opportunities available. Women must have education and training to enter the labour market and take part in it on an equal footing with men, and to be able to exercise their rights and participate in political and social life.

20. There has been a substantial increase in the number of girls and women in the school and student population, and women are climbing higher up the diploma ladder. However, there are still very few women in those areas of activity to which access is, in most cases, restricted to precisely those candidates who hold academic qualifications. For example, it is still very difficult for women to gain a foothold in those professions which bestow recognition and influence, especially when they are highly rewarding financially.⁹

21. Tables 1 and 2 show students enrolment at first and second level of education respectively from 1982 to 1986. Looking at the two tables, there is no doubt that there has been an increase of girl's enrolment at both levels. As shown in table 1, enrolment of girls in some countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland according to the estimated figures, is slightly more than that of male students. At the post secondary and university or higher institutes level, a big gap still exists between females and males enrolment.

22. As regards technical education, many African countries have stressed its importance in national development. However, girls enrolment in technical education is indeed very low. Recent studies undertaken in Kenya, Sierra Leone and

⁹ UNESCO: Survey on the Representation of Women in Higher Education, Research, Educational Planning, Administration and Management, March 1987.

Swaziland on women and scientific professions have established the marginal representation of girls/women in science and technical-based training programmes and professions.¹⁰

23. Review of the progress made since the adoption of the Arusha Strategies and their implementation process indicates that a few countries in Africa have achieved equal enrolment of females and males at primary level and an increase in the proportion of females at secondary level. Teacher training institutions have observed higher rates of women in many countries. The big drawback in many countries is at the higher institutions of learning where a big gap still exists between females and males' enrolment.

24. Despite an increase in the proportion of females enrolment, this review shows that in many countries of the region, the number of female students decreases at the higher secondary level and hence at the university level because of the female dropout rate. There are certain social and cultural factors that negatively affect female participation at higher levels of the school system. These factors among others include the increasing rate of teenage pregnancies in secondary schools, marriage at an early age which continue to contribute significantly to the high female dropout rate and because of current economic crisis. It has been reported in some cases that males (sons) are still preferred over females (daughters) when purse strings are tight and there is choice to make between sending girls and boys to school particularly beyond the first level.

¹⁰ Women and Scientific Professions in Africa: The Case of Kenya, Sierra Leone and Swaziland. Commissioned by ECA, September 1988.

Table 1: Students enrolled at first level of education
(in thousands)

Subregion, country	1982	M a l e s				1986	1982	F e m a l e s				1986
		1983	1984	1985	1983			1984	1985			
NORTH AFRICA	8 309	8 561	8 693	8 987*	9 284*	5 865*	6 134	6 278	6 492*	6 714		
Algeria	1 867	1 914	1 946	1 991*	2 035*	1 375	1 423	1 469	1 502*	1 555		
Egypt	2 949	3 094	3 248	3 401*	3 560*	2 088	2 247	2 352	2 453*	2 576		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	380	399	417	437*	454*	342	354	369	385*	402		
Morocco	1 521	1 536	1 415	1 430*	1 447*	922	931	864	876*	887		
Sudan	936	944	971	1 001*	1 030*	643	655	675	695*	715		
Tunisia	656	674	696*	727*	758*	495	524	549	571*	596		
WEST AFRICA	11 963	11 790	11 959*	12 202*	12 457*	8 691	8 807	8 906*	9 100*	9 301		
Benin	299	287	296	296	296	139	142	148	148*	159		
Burkina Faso	145	175	198	221*	246*	92	102	115	130*	145		
Cape Verde	28	28	29*	29*	30*	27	27	28*	28*	29		
Côte d'Ivoire	673	684	713	743*	775*	462	476	496*	517*	538		
Gambia	34	38	41*	45*	52*	19	23	25	28*	31		
Ghana	887	930	825	827*	834*	688	723	640	650*	655		
Guinea	167	166	193	201*	207*	81	80	91	95*	97		
Guinea-Bissau	50	50	50*	50*	50*	24	25	26*	26*	26		
Liberia	155	163	171	180*	189*	95	100	105	110*	115		
Mali	187	188	190	192*	193*	109	111	112	113*	114		
Mauritania	65	68	72	75*	79*	42	44*	46*	48*	51		
Niger	157	167	175	183*	191*	88	94	98*	103*	109		
Nigeria	8 348	8 052	8 175*	8 297*	8 420*	6 307	6 332	6 423*	6 519*	6 616		
Senegal	273	298	320	336*	353*	180	198	213	234*	255		
Sierra Leone	208	218	230	242*	255*	143	151*	160*	168*	177		
Togo	297	278	281*	284*	287*	195	179	181*	183*	185		
CENTRAL AFRICA	4 717	4 849	5 029*	5 206*	5 404*	3 550	3 696	3 866*	4 018*	4 169		
Burundi	152	180	203	211*	219*	101	121	141	146*	153		
Cameroon	878	851	891	921*	960*	699	713	744	784*	810		
Central African Republic	176	192	203	215*	228*	95	99	105	111*	117		
Chad	197	204	209	218*	229*	72	75	79	81*	84		
Congo	217	229	236	243*	253*	206	214	223	234*	243		
Equatorial Guinea	26	32	34	36*	38*	24	30	32	34*	36		
Gabon	84	87	91	94*	98*	82	85	87	90*	94		
Rwanda	386	402	407	417*	428*	361	360	375*	385*	395		
Sao Tome & Principe	8	8	8	8*	8*	8	8	8*	8*	8		
Zaire	2 593	2 664	2 747	2 843*	2 943*	1 902	1 991	2 072*	2 145*	2 220		

Table 1 (Cont'd)

Subregion, country	M a l e s					F e m a l e s				
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
EASTERN & SOUTHERN AFRICA	11 371	11 553	11 982*	12 477*	12 970*	9 496	9 774	10 112*	10 620*	11 011*
Angola	642	666*	697*	729*	764*	536	567*	594*	622*	651*
Botswana	88	92	99	106	113*	99	106	111	117	123*
Comoros	38*	40*	43*	44*	47*	27	28	29	31*	32*
Djibouti	12	13	14*	15*	16*	9	9	10	11*	12*
Ethiopia	1 587	1 561	1 684*	1 721*	1 814*	924	937	949*	1 054*	1 112*
Kenya	2 179	2 250	2 269	2 435	2 513	2 006	2 074	2 111	2 268	2 331
Lesotho	119	126	131	139	142	159	164	166	175	177
Madagascar	884	885	935	957	1 004	783	817	863	833	915
Malawi	502	488	515	530*	550*	367	359	384	401*	415*
Mauritius	69	68	67	71	73	68	68	67	70	71
Mozambique	712	667	694*	726*	740*	535	495	523*	549*	573*
Seychelles	7	7	7	7*	7*	7	7	7	7*	7*
Somalia	142	142	143	144*	145*	77*	79*	80*	81*	82*
Swaziland	62	64	67	70*	74*	52	64	67	70*	74*
Tanzania	1 816	1 828	1 845	1 878*	1 911*	1 697	1 725	1 772*	1 804*	1 837*
Uganda	928	954	1 009	1 057*	1 107*	689	728	762*	797*	834*
Zambia	594	632	663	693*	726*	528	562	587*	615*	643
Zimbabwe	990	1 060	1 100	1 155*	1 204*	915	984	1 030	1 066*	1 111*
TOTAL AFRICA	36 360	36 753	37 663*	38 672*	40 115*	27 594	28 411	29 162*	30 400*	31 190*

Source: ECA Secretariat.

* Indicate estimates of figures.

Table 2: Students enrolled at second level of education
(number)

Subregion, country	<u>M a l e s</u>				<u>F e m a l e s</u>			
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1982	1983	1984	1985
NORTH AFRICA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Algeria	...	898 562	1 001 399*	1 128 961*	...	574 000	640 000*	722 000
Egypt	1 890 000	1 953 000	...	...	1 199 000	1 249 000	...	...
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	199 626	...	...	...	141 000	...	...	...
Morocco	590 891	631 983	683 999	723 907	377 000	414 000	446 000	465 000
Sudan	273 814	297 981	302 698	...	182 000	209 000	219 000	...
Tunisia	221 550	238 712	253 044	274 050	134 000	149 000	166 000	184 000
WEST AFRICA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Benin	39 804*	87 958*	85 316	...	36 681	35 926	35 266	...
Burkina Faso	21 635	23 567	28 498	35 574	10 970	12 337	15 345	17 991
Cape Verde	...	2 815*	...	...	...	1 876*	...	...
Côte d'Ivoire	171 406	176 387	186 761	...	80 720	75 030	80 040*	...
Gambia	8 639	10 028	11 111	11 172	3 785	4 402	4 802	4 746
Ghana	755 710	471 946	468 551	512 283*	273 855	281 719	282 641	313 980
Guinea	68 880	70 433	73 964	68 261	25 968	27 286	27 157	24 493
Guinea-Bissau	6 754	7 816	7 378	...	1 678	1 818	2 006	...
Liberia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mali	50 726	82 426	...	...	19 727*	20 792	...	...
Mauritania	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Niger	32 017*	33 032*	...	...	13 077*	14 156*	...	...
Nigeria	2 526 044	2 599 681*	...	...	867 142*	951 526*	...	...
Senegal	73 581	76 357	81 358	...	36 356	37 204	40 138	...
Sierra Leone	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Togo	89 302	76 902	69 106	...	29 074	25 084	21 884	...
CENTRAL AFRICA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Burundi	13 410	14 358	15 736	...	6 507	7 066	8 248	...
Cameroon	174 580	186 643	203 854	...	99 080	109 895	124 569	...
Central African Republic	40 972	...	42 997	36 665	14 396	...	15 107	12 882
Chad	...	...	38 667	...	...	...	6 945	...
Congo	123 732	118 401	116 435	125 725	85 983	83 182	86 473	96 908
Equatorial Guinea	3 625*	...	...	...	743	...	...	...
Gabon	19 657	21 456	...	...	13 035	14 704	...	...
Rwanda	9 082	9 764	10 852	11 898	5 148	4 997	5 691	6 235
Sao Tome & Principe	3 593	3 668	...	...	2 303	2 436	...	...
Zaire	1 276 885	1 541 526	...	...	194 292	610 374	...	...

Table 2 (Cont'd)

Subregion, country	Males					Females	
	1987	1981	1984	1985	1982	1983	1984
EASTERN & SOUTHERN AFRICA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Angola	...	...	...	...	55 000*	...	...
Botswana	...	21 441	14 000	16 981	...	14 000	17 000
Comoros	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Djibouti	1 741	4 049	4 197	4 323	2 185	2 282	...
Ethiopia	372 007	373 691	399 801	399 865	163 000	208 000	229 000
Kenya	308 638	308 108	319 893	271 068*	182 000	209 000	213 000
Lesotho	11 182	12 377	13 422	14 372	17 000	20 000	20 000
Madagascar	...	...	318 013*	...	...	...	212 000
Malawi	18 626	16 116	17 413	...	6 000	6 000	7 000
Mauritius	40 864	41 233	40 105	38 319	37 000	37 000	35 000
Mozambique	16 001	14 374	95 364	104 490	32 000	37 000	41 000
Seychelles	1 376	1 871	1 941	1 978	1 793	1 896	1 900
Somalia	11 700	11 921	...	...	20 934	21 434	...
Swaziland	...	...	...	...	13 000	14 000	...
Tanzania	51 841	51 372	54 895*	60 412*	27 000	29 000	30 000
Uganda	37 417	...	...	...	43 000	...	...
Zambia	11 476	...	...	...	...	39 000	...
Zimbabwe	102 852	101 397	...	...	94 000	129 000	...
TOTAL AFRICA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Source: ECA secretariat.

* Indicate estimates of figures.

... (Three dots) indicate that data are not available or not reported.

84 1985

000 19 000

2 718

000 256 000

000 166 000

000 21 000

000* ...

000 ...

000 34 000

000 47 000

948 1 997

... ..

... ..

000 34 000

... ..

... ..

... ..

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... ..

25. In general, however, recent studies by Benjamin Gyepi-Garbrah,¹¹ George Ishiwani¹² and Joan Amarteifio¹³ have observed the high rate of female dropouts at all levels of the education system as a result of teenage pregnancies.

26. With respect to non-formal education, women's participation for the last few years has been much greater than that of men in several countries of the region. Most countries in the region have recognized the need to combat illiteracy and have made strenuous efforts to reduce its rate through literacy programmes and campaigns. Since most of the rural women are either illiterate or semi-illiterate, non-formal education has played and continue to play a significant role to widen their skills and ability to use new knowledge and techniques so vital to the development process. In most cases the approach adopted by many countries to non-formal education is that of integrating the teaching into overall training programmes with a bias to functional literacy such as bookkeeping, income generating activities, home-economic programmes and the like.

27. To summarize, there is no doubt that considerable progress has been made in increasing female access to educational opportunities. This progress is seen not only in increasing in the female share in total enrolment at the primary and secondary levels (see tables 1 and 2), but also in the increase in female participation rates. In terms of the long-term objectives of equality, development and peace, this progress, however, must essentially be seen as a means of the attainment of higher goals, namely the extent to which improvement in educational opportunities leads to improved opportunities in the labour market, increased status of women in society, improved health of children and the family and the increased participation of women at the decision-making level. Investing in females in terms of providing access to education is not a panacea, but it may make a critical contribution to various spheres of development and equality.

3. Employment

28. Women's participation in this sector still remains inadequately quantified and available indicators still fail to measure a whole range of jobs performed by women and data to feed into those indicators that have been devised in recent years is still hard to come by. However, with the changing perception of the role of women in connection with various socio-economic development over the decade, and particularly as a result of their dramatic increased participation in the labour market, more concerted efforts have been undertaken by governments and international organizations to guarantee respect for the principle of non-discrimination in all areas of employment, training and working conditions.

¹¹ Benjamin Gyepi-Garbrah, Adolescent Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Overview, The Pathfinder Fund 1985.

¹² Ishiwani, George, Women and Scientific Professions in Africa: The Case of Kenya, Commissioned by ECA, September 1983.

¹³ Joan Amarteifio, Women and Scientific Professions in Africa: The Case of Sierra Leone, Commissioned by ECA, 1985.

29. Review of the progress made since 1934 show that most governments in the Africa region have taken minimal measures to create job opportunities for women in the formal employment sector because of the effect of structural adjustment policies to reduce workers in the public sector in order to curb inflation and other economic factors. In some countries, recent measures established include promotion of deserving and qualified women to high and key positions; full salary (to working mothers) during maternity leave, rehabilitation and placement of women in jobs among other measures.

30. Accordingly, as a result of a complex set of social and economic transformations, women's income at all levels from formal to informal employment or self-employment has become an economic necessity for the large majority of households all over the world. It is recognized that the poorer the family, the more important the woman's income becomes. The economic crisis has accentuated the need for women to have an income and at the same time has made it more difficult to obtain. The rapid increase in male and female unemployment and the overall degradation of the already low living standards, especially in the Africa region, have increased the family's dependence on the income-earning and income-substituting activities of women.

31. According to the latest ECA statistics derived out of a region-wide socio-economic survey conducted in 1987,¹⁴ the sectoral distribution of economically active population (differentiated by sex) is as follows: the percentage of females employed in agriculture in 1982 was 80.3% as compared to 78.7% in 1986; in industry 5.3% in 1982 versus 5.8% in 1986; and in the services area 14.5% in 1982 as compared to 15.6% in 1986. Similarly, Tables 3, 4 and 5 on economically active population (sectoral distribution) female in agriculture, services and industry (1981-1987) respectively demonstrate this trend. A look at table 3 on agriculture sector, the total percentage of females participation in 1981 was 80.75% as compared to 78.15% in 1987. Though the percentage differ from one subregion to another and from country to country, table 3 shows that there is a slight decrease in the percentage of females participation from 1981 to 1987. One would have expected an increase in percentages of female participation in agriculture in 1987.

32. It is conceivable that this slight decline in agriculture could be attributable to drought. The severest spell of drought was during the period 1982 - 1985, when as many as 21 African countries, ranging from the sub-humid Sudan-Guinea zone in west Africa to the dry savannah of East and Southern Africa were so badly affected that they required emergency food aid at one time or another. In the Sahelian belt for example, cereal production in 1987 declined about 12 per cent in

¹⁴ UNECA, Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1986-1987, Addis Ababa, UNECA 1988 (Doc. E/ECA/CM.14/4).

relation to 1986 in the nine Sahelian countries members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)-Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal.¹⁵

33. Table 4 on services sector show that the total percentage of females employed in the sector in 1981 was 14.15% versus 15.95% in 1987. Here again the situation varies from subregion to subregion and from country to country within the subregion. For example, Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (North Africa); Cape Verde (West Africa); Mauritius and Seychelles (Eastern and Southern Africa), have high percentage of females employed in the services sector.

34. While table 5 on industry sector shows that the total percentage of females employed in industry in 1981 was 5.10% as compared to 5.90% in 1987. As a whole, and as can be seen in table 5, the percentage of females employed in industry is the lowest compared to that in the agriculture sector and the services sector. Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Cape Verde however, have, compared to the rest of the countries in Africa, high percentage of females employed in industry.

35. As is obvious from the above figures, while changes have occurred in the distribution of female participation in the labour force, this is a far cry from the recommendations of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies regarding women's occupational mobility and participation in development.

¹⁵ Recovery. No. 4 December, 1987.

Table 3: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female
Agriculture (in percentage)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
NORTH AFRICA	43.85	43.10	42.35	41.70	41.10	40.35	39.65
Algeria	9.95	9.45	8.90	8.40	7.90	7.40	6.90
Egypt	18.95	18.25	17.70	17.10	16.60	16.15	15.55
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	38.20	36.55	34.85	33.20	31.50	30.95	30.50
Morocco	34.65	34.30	33.95	33.65	33.40	32.75	32.10
Sudan	86.40	85.70	85.05	84.35	83.75	82.80	82.05
Tunisia	31.75	30.40	29.10	27.75	26.40	25.60	24.90
WEST AFRICA	73.45	73.10	72.70	72.40	72.05	71.75	71.25
Benin	73.60	72.80	71.85	71.15	70.35	69.35	68.50
Burkina Faso	86.10	85.95	85.75	85.55	85.30	85.05	84.80
Cape Verde	30.00	29.05	28.15	27.25	25.70	25.00	24.30
Côte d'Ivoire	74.45	73.85	73.30	72.75	72.30	71.70	71.15
Gambia	92.85	92.65	92.50	92.30	92.20	91.95	91.70
Ghana	51.55	51.00	50.45	49.90	49.40	48.80	48.25
Guinea	85.60	86.95	86.45	85.80	85.10	84.45	83.75
Guinea-Bissau	91.75	91.55	91.40	91.20	91.05	90.90	90.75
Liberia	85.60	85.00	84.00	83.45	82.55	82.05	81.55
Mali	78.15	77.85	77.65	77.40	77.05	76.65	76.40
Mauritania	86.30	85.95	85.55	85.20	84.80	84.30	83.80
Niger	93.95	93.65	93.45	93.15	92.90	92.70	92.55
Nigeria	68.60	63.55	63.30	63.10	67.90	67.60	67.25
Senegal	89.70	89.45	89.20	89.00	88.70	88.60	88.35
Sierra Leone	81.50	81.05	80.55	80.15	79.60	79.15	78.75
Togo	67.35	66.95	66.50	66.15	65.90	65.45	65.05
CENTRAL AFRICA	91.05	90.85	90.65	90.50	90.25	90.05	89.80
Burundi	97.85	97.85	97.80	97.80	97.80	97.80	97.80
Cameroon	77.45	77.00	76.45	76.05	75.55	75.00	74.35
Central African Republic	74.25	73.90	73.15	72.80	72.25	71.65	71.30
Chad	86.65	86.40	86.00	85.70	85.35	85.05	84.70
Congo	85.95	85.75	85.25	85.10	84.60	84.15	83.40
Equatorial Guinea	84.90	84.35	83.75	83.20	82.60	82.65	81.45
Gabon	87.40	86.75	86.15	85.60	84.90	84.30	83.65
Rwanda	97.90	97.90	97.85	97.85	97.80	97.70	97.70
Sao Tomé and Príncipe	76.80	76.05	75.30	74.55	73.80	73.05	72.30
Zaire	94.55	94.40	94.20	94.00	93.90	93.70	93.50

Table 3: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female
Agriculture (in percentage) (cont'd)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	88.75	88.35	88.00	87.65	87.30	86.95	86.55
Angola	88.95	88.70	88.50	88.25	88.00	87.65	87.30
Botswana	84.95	84.20	83.40	82.65	81.90	81.00	80.15
Comoros	87.20	86.80	86.40	86.05	85.70	85.10	84.55
Djibouti	89.10	87.85	87.55	87.25	87.00	86.70	86.45
Ethiopia	84.55	84.15	83.75	83.35	82.90	82.50	82.05
Kenya	85.80	85.50	84.90	84.50	84.10	83.65	83.10
Lesotho	88.95	88.40	87.85	87.30	86.75	86.05	85.35
Madagascar	93.20	92.70	92.50	92.20	91.80	91.25	90.75
Malawi	93.55	93.35	93.00	92.75	92.45	92.20	91.75
Mauritius	30.20	29.45	28.65	27.90	27.10	26.45	25.60
Mozambique	97.00	96.95	96.90	96.85	96.80	96.75	96.70
Seychelles	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.15	7.15
Somalia	89.00	88.65	88.20	87.85	87.40	86.65	86.15
Swaziland	82.15	81.75	81.45	81.10	80.75	80.25	79.70
Tanzania, United Republic of	91.50	91.15	90.80	90.45	90.15	89.85	89.45
Uganda	88.10	87.50	86.90	86.30	85.80	85.35	84.80
Zambia	87.55	86.35	85.15	83.95	82.75	82.50	82.30
Zimbabwe	81.75	81.50	81.20	80.95	80.65	80.40	80.05
TOTAL AFRICA	80.75	80.25	79.85	79.45	79.05	78.65	78.15

Source: ECA secretariat.

Table 4: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female Services
(in percentage)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
NORTH AFRICA	35.15	35.55	35.95	36.25	36.50	37.50	37.45
Algeria	67.85	68.05	68.30	68.45	68.65	68.85	69.05
Egypt	63.85	64.20	64.40	64.65	64.80	64.95	65.25
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	48.25	49.55	50.90	52.20	53.55	53.70	53.85
Morocco	31.15	31.30	31.50	31.65	31.75	32.00	32.25
Sudan	9.50	10.00	10.45	10.95	11.35	12.05	12.50
Tunisia	22.50	22.85	23.25	23.75	24.50	24.75	24.95
WEST AFRICA	20.40	20.60	20.85	21.05	21.30	21.50	21.90
Benin	23.00	23.75	24.55	25.20	25.85	26.70	27.45
Burkina Faso	10.35	10.45	10.60	10.70	10.90	11.10	11.30
Cape Verde	47.90	48.70	49.40	50.15	51.50	52.05	52.55
Côte d'Ivoire	20.45	20.95	21.30	21.80	22.15	22.60	23.05
Gambia	4.85	5.05	5.15	5.30	5.40	5.60	5.80
Ghana	32.30	32.65	33.00	33.40	33.70	34.05	34.45
Guinea	7.15	7.50	7.80	8.20	8.60	8.90	9.25
Guinea-Bissau	6.55	6.65	6.70	6.80	6.85	6.95	7.05
Liberia	12.85	13.40	14.35	14.85	15.70	16.15	16.60
Mali	18.40	18.65	18.80	19.00	19.30	19.65	19.85
Mauritania	10.35	10.50	10.70	10.80	10.85	11.20	11.55
Niger	5.90	6.20	6.40	6.65	6.90	7.10	7.25
Nigeria	24.40	24.55	24.65	24.75	24.85	25.05	25.35
Senegal	7.95	8.15	8.35	8.50	8.70	8.80	9.00
Sierra Leone	14.80	15.15	15.55	15.80	16.25	16.60	16.90
Togo	25.20	25.50	25.85	26.10	26.25	26.65	26.85
CENTRAL AFRICA	7.25	7.40	7.55	7.65	7.90	8.05	8.25
Burundi	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10
Cameroon	19.35	19.60	20.00	20.20	20.50	20.80	21.30
Central African Republic	22.15	22.45	23.15	23.45	23.90	24.20	24.60
Chad	12.25	12.45	12.75	13.00	13.30	13.55	13.85
Congo	12.30	12.45	12.85	12.95	12.95	13.70	14.30
Equatorial Guinea	12.25	12.65	13.05	13.45	13.85	14.25	14.65
Gabon	10.05	10.60	11.10	11.55	11.95	12.40	12.95
Rwanda	1.45	1.45	1.45	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.55
Sao Tomé and Príncipe	19.40	20.05	20.65	21.30	21.90	22.55	23.15
Zaire	3.95	4.05	4.25	4.40	4.45	4.60	4.75

Table 4: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female Services
(in percentage) (cont'd)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	8.20	8.55	8.80	9.05	9.30	9.55	9.85
Angola	9.40	9.65	9.80	10.05	10.25	10.55	10.85
Botswana	12.95	13.60	14.15	14.75	15.30	16.00	16.65
Comoros	10.10	10.60	11.15	11.65	12.10	12.80	13.45
Djibouti	9.70	10.05	10.40	10.85	11.15	11.45	11.75
Ethiopia	9.10	9.30	9.45	9.65	9.85	10.00	10.25
Kenya	11.40	11.55	12.10	12.40	12.70	13.05	13.45
Lesotho	9.00	9.45	9.90	10.35	10.80	11.30	11.75
Madagascar	5.05	5.30	5.60	5.80	6.15	6.55	6.95
Malawi	4.00	4.15	4.30	4.40	4.50	4.60	4.85
Mauritius	56.70	57.35	58.00	58.65	59.35	59.85	60.30
Mozambique	2.20	2.20	2.25	2.30	2.30	2.35	2.40
Seychelles	85.05	84.00	82.90	81.85	80.75	79.70	78.60
Somalia	9.25	9.65	10.10	10.50	10.95	11.70	12.25
Swaziland	14.45	14.65	14.80	15.00	15.20	15.55	15.95
Tanzania, United Republic of	6.85	7.25	7.70	8.10	8.55	8.85	9.30
Uganda	9.85	10.35	10.80	11.30	11.65	12.00	12.40
Zambia	9.70	10.85	12.05	13.20	14.40	14.60	14.75
Zimbabwe	14.65	14.80	15.05	15.20	15.45	15.65	15.90
TOTAL AFRICA	14.15	14.50	15.05	15.05	15.35	15.60	15.95

Source: ECA secretariat.

Table 5: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female Industry
(in percentage)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
NORTH AFRICA	21.00	21.35	21.70	22.05	22.40	22.65	22.90
Algeria	22.20	22.50	22.80	23.15	23.45	23.75	24.05
Egypt	17.20	17.55	17.90	18.25	18.60	18.90	19.20
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	13.55	13.90	14.25	14.60	14.95	15.35	15.65
Morocco	34.20	34.40	34.55	34.70	34.85	35.25	35.65
Sudan	4.10	4.30	4.50	4.70	4.90	5.15	5.45
Tunisia	45.75	46.75	47.65	48.50	49.10	49.65	50.25
WEST AFRICA	6.15	6.30	6.40	6.55	6.65	6.75	6.85
Benin	3.40	3.45	3.60	3.65	3.80	3.95	4.05
Burkina Faso	3.55	3.60	3.65	3.75	3.80	3.85	3.90
Cape Verde	22.10	22.25	22.45	22.60	22.80	22.95	23.15
Côte d'Ivoire	5.10	5.20	5.40	5.45	5.55	5.70	5.80
Gambia	2.30	2.30	2.35	2.35	2.40	2.45	2.50
Ghana	16.15	16.35	16.55	16.70	16.90	17.15	17.30
Guinea	5.25	5.55	5.75	6.00	6.30	6.65	7.00
Guinea-Bissau	1.70	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.15	2.20
Liberia	1.55	1.60	1.65	1.70	1.75	1.80	1.85
Mali	3.45	3.50	3.55	3.60	3.65	3.70	3.75
Mauritania	3.35	3.55	3.75	4.00	4.35	4.50	4.65
Niger	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Nigeria	6.80	6.90	7.05	7.15	7.25	7.35	7.40
Senegal	2.35	2.40	2.45	2.50	2.55	2.60	2.65
Sierra Leone	3.70	3.80	3.90	4.05	4.15	4.25	4.35
Togo	7.45	7.55	7.65	7.75	7.85	7.90	7.95
CENTRAL AFRICA	1.70	1.75	1.80	1.85	1.85	1.90	1.95
Burundi	1.05	1.05	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10
Cameroon	3.20	3.40	3.55	3.75	3.95	4.20	4.35
Central African Republic	3.60	3.65	3.70	3.75	3.85	3.95	4.10
Chad	1.10	1.15	1.25	1.30	1.35	1.40	1.45
Congo	1.75	1.80	1.90	1.95	2.05	2.15	2.30
Equatorial Guinea	2.85	3.00	3.20	3.35	3.55	3.70	3.90
Gabon	2.55	2.65	2.75	2.95	3.15	3.30	3.40
Rwanda	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.75	0.80
Sao Tomé and Príncipe	3.80	3.90	4.05	4.15	4.30	4.40	4.55
Zaire	1.50	1.55	1.55	1.60	1.65	1.70	1.75

Table 5: Economically Active Population: Sectoral Distribution - Female Industry
(in percentage) (cont'd)

Subregion, country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	3.05	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60
Angola	1.65	1.65	1.70	1.70	1.75	1.80	1.85
Botswana	2.10	2.20	2.45	2.60	2.80	3.00	3.20
Comoros	2.70	2.60	2.45	2.30	2.20	2.10	2.00
Djibouti	2.20	2.10	2.05	1.90	1.85	1.85	1.80
Ethiopia	6.35	6.55	6.80	7.00	7.25	7.50	7.70
Kenya	2.80	2.95	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.35	3.45
Lesotho	2.05	2.15	2.25	2.35	2.45	2.65	2.90
Madagascar	1.75	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.30
Malawi	2.35	2.50	2.70	2.85	3.05	3.20	3.40
Mauritius	13.10	13.20	13.35	13.45	13.55	13.70	13.90
Mozambique	0.80	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.90
Seychelles	7.85	8.90	10.00	11.05	12.15	13.20	14.30
Somalia	1.75	1.70	1.70	1.65	1.65	1.60	1.60
Swaziland	3.45	3.60	3.75	3.90	4.05	4.20	4.35
Tanzania, United Republic of	1.65	1.60	1.50	1.45	1.30	1.30	1.25
Uganda	2.05	2.15	2.30	2.40	2.55	2.65	2.80
Zambia	2.75	2.80	2.80	2.85	2.85	2.90	2.95
Zimbabwe	3.60	3.70	3.75	3.85	3.90	3.95	4.00
TOTAL AFRICA	5.10	5.25	5.35	5.50	5.60	5.75	5.90

Source: ECA secretariat.

(i) Industry

36. According to a recent ECA study on the role of women in Agro-industries undertaken in Botswana, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, the findings show that women are employed in a variety of agro-industries, however, the bulk are in semi-skilled and casual labour categories.¹⁶ There is also a tendency for women to be in specific lines of operation quite often requiring routine or repetitive work such as canning, assembling or clerical work. Very few were in technical or management categories in all the four countries studied.

37. Involvement of women in industries is mainly found in countries which have a wide range of industries including agro-industries. Low educational achievements of women in technical fields has inevitably resulted in limited women's participation in industrial employment establishments.

(ii) Informal Sector

38. Africa's informal sector is presently fairly underdeveloped and is characterized by low productivity. Although reliable statistics on the participants in this sector hardly exist because they are not often recorded in official statistics, according to various estimates in the West African countries, women constitute between 60 and 80 percent of the total labour force. However, most women face among others financial constraints with hard working conditions.

39. According to a recent study undertaken in Eastern and Southern Africa (Kenya, Mauritius, Swaziland and Zambia) Karanja asserts that problems of capital formation was common to all entrepreneurs male or female but more intense among female entrepreneurs who seemed to face discrimination from all the lending institutions including those where national governments had control over lending policies.¹⁷

40. Employment in the informal sector continues to play a key role and a hope for survival for a greater majority of women and the urban poor. The recent issue of UNDP news ('On the Border of Despair', July/August 1988), states that women in Zambia account for 65 per cent ownership and 55 per cent employment in the informal, small-scale enterprise sector. Review progress made in this sector shows that many countries in Africa have taken minimal measures to provide support to women's activities in the informal sector through income-generation activities, small loans and credit to groups of women involved in various activities. Projects in the informal sector should prove themselves more viable, economically sound and self-supporting.

¹⁶ UNECA: The Role of Women in Agro-Industries in Eastern and Southern Africa and Measures for Strengthening Such Role. (Doc. ECA/ATRCW/89/1).

¹⁷ UNECA. Study on the Status of Women Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector. (Doc. ECA/ATRCW/1988).

41. In general, despite an increase in the employment of women in the various sectors, progress has been slow for various reasons. Sad though it is, present societal attitudes to the employment of women in certain sectors of the economy remain conservative. These attitudes which tend to stereotype women to a set category of jobs, consequently make it difficult even for qualified and trained women to assume jobs at higher levels of responsibility. Until society's own prejudices against the female gender for an alleged incapacity or inability to handle so-called high-level jobs are removed, the desired diversification of employment opportunities for women will not be attained.

C. Agriculture and Food Production

42. A growing body of research and information has established that women play a crucial role in African agriculture. They constitute the backbone of food and agricultural production in small farm areas and provide a substantial proportion of family labour resources for cash crop production. Women remain the provider of 60 to 80 per cent of the household food in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Statistics on women's labour force participation in agriculture (based on national sources and/or estimates of the International Labour Organization) in sub-Saharan Africa show an intensive participation of women in agriculture. In six countries, (the Gambia, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Malawi and Zaire) about half of the agricultural labour force are women, with well over half in Botswana, the United Republic of Tanzania, Cameroon and Sierra Leone. In another four countries (Ghana, Senegal, Togo and Burkina Faso), women comprise between 42 to 46 percent of the agricultural labour force, and in the remaining countries from 31 to 39 percent.¹⁸ Table 3 shows and confirms this high participation of women in agriculture.

43. The Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa (1984) identified obstacles to women's advancement in agriculture, elaborated strategies for overcoming the basic obstacles and recommended actions and/or measures required at national, regional and international levels. In broad terms, they included: technological improvements; integrated farming systems aimed at self-sufficiency in food and energy production; improvement of training for women; improvement of women's organizational capacity in farming activities; access to productive factors such as land, capital and water; improved basic rural infrastructures; and improvements in marketing such as formation of women into marketing co-operatives, training for market women to improve their work environment, food preservation, storage and the like.

44. Many governments have embarked on measures to improve and increase the role of women in agriculture. In some countries, several projects have been undertaken to enhance the role of women, they include the development of off-season crops and the intensification of the role of women in food production, preserving and marketing. In the area of education, advanced technical training centres to train women in agriculture have been set up. More and more women are

¹⁸ World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: Report of the Secretary-General, A/CONF.116/4. December 1984, p. 40.

being involved in agriculture extension services as trainers as well as practitioners and farmer groups to make the delivery of these services easier have been formed. Appropriate labour and time-saving devices have been introduced in some countries to cater for all agricultural activities such as ploughing, weeding, harvesting, transporting, preserving and processing of agricultural products.

45. As regards to credit for agricultural activities, some countries have taken steps to expand credit facilities to women who in the past were not considered eligible for credit. However, women have few possibilities of getting access to capital especially to relatively large amounts. This is because the credit and finance institutions can only give loans to those who display security such as land in order to get loans and in this, the women are disadvantaged. Women are making appreciable efforts to deal with this problem through various sources and activities. National Agricultural Finance Corporations, the Kenya Women's Finance Trust Limited for instance and many other finance institutions have attempted to provide and acquire funds to enable them to stand surety for women borrowers. This effort could go a long way to help the women improve their financial capabilities through borrowing from established lending institutions. In some countries of Africa, women try to overcome their financial problems by engaging in marketing activities as a means of earning cash to meet their household expenditure and any other financial needs. A case in point is the well-known market women of West Africa from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

46. Land ownership in most countries of Africa is still vested in the male members of the family. The traditional allocation of household fields to the wife or wives had been for long time recognized as long as women (wives) remained members of the family. However, with the introduction of land consolidation, the women's security may not be guaranteed any more because the community can no longer exercise legal vetoes to protect a woman's land rights.¹⁹ Accordingly, experiences with various land reform programmes have not been satisfactory. Furthermore, it should be noted that the programmes for appropriation and reallocation of land by the state in some countries for example have neglected women's interests. Women in the rural area in particular and because they are more directly involved in agriculture and food production, should have equal access to land, education, technology, training, extension services, credit and other resources.

D. Population, Health and Nutrition

47. Until the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1975 - 1985), few official pronouncements linked planned parenthood with the advancement of women or promoted it for that purpose. However, since the adoption of the Strategies for the Advancement of Women (Arusha 1984, Nairobi, 1985), this review shows that African governments have made significant efforts to implement programmes in areas such as immunization, Primary Health Care (PHC), Maternal Child Health (MCH) and Family Planning (FP). Several countries have

¹⁹ Towards Strategies for Strengthening the Position of Women in Food Production: An Overview and Proposals in Africa, INSTRAW Publication, May 1985.

reported that there have been an increase on women's participation in family planning services, pre-natal and post-natal programmes as well as a general awareness and use of the health services available in the community.

48. Within the general context of WHO's Health for All by the year 2000, member states have designed programmes aimed at improving health conscious of the fact that health is an essential factor in economic development. Healthy people constitute (in economic terms) the productive labour and women play a dominant role in the labour force and yet are the most and worst affected group in terms of health (maternal, mortality and fertility rates etc.). It is necessary that special attention be given to women's health especially the health needs of female adolescents, pregnant and lactating women since they play an important role in the labour force (women represent more than 35% of the total active population in Africa), largely in rural agriculture and in the informal sector.

49. The African Region is getting closer to attaining the targets set by the World Population Plan of Action (WPPA)²⁰ regarding life expectancy and infant mortality. Much of this success is owed in large part to women's contributions in ensuring that children are immunized, better-fed and live under better sanitary conditions. Accordingly, most African countries as reflected in the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (KPA) on population, have recognized the need to take population issues as central to development planning and to address high levels of fertility and mortality so as to achieve population growth rates that are compatible with the desired economic growth and social development goals.²¹ The United Nations Programme of Action for Africa Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAERD), 1986 - 1990 has also emphasized this.

50. However, fertility levels in African countries have not changed much and in fact it has remained high for decades in spite of the various changes taking place in development and the various programmes initiated for the family planning services. High fertility rates have been reported to be above 6 children per woman in many countries.²² The factors leading to this high fertility rates are many. They include among others: the social and cultural values with regard to family formation and childbearing and the low socio-economic development. Women need further support in family planning. These should include among others: information and access to family planning programmes; and appropriate legislation.

²⁰ UN/Centre for Economic and Social Information, World Population Conference: Action taken at Bucharest - New York: UN 1974.

²¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population, 1984.

²² Economic Commission for Africa: Social, Culture and Legislative Factors, Affecting Family Formation and Fertility in Selected African Countries, October, 1988. ECA/POP/TP/88/2(2.2).

51. As regards to maternal deaths, it is reported that the number of maternal deaths is currently at 150 per 1000²³ even with improved knowledge of family planning methods (including birth spacing) sanitation and prenatal care.

52. Closely associated with the health status of countries is their level of nutrition. Nutritional condition of pregnant and lactating women is very important not only for their health but also for the babies to be born and those who are being breast-fed. The ability of the African woman to jointly perform her reproductive and productive roles to society's benefit depends largely on her health and nutritional intake.

53. Women's education has been shown to have very positive correlation with changes in fertility levels and attitudes, family size, marriage, health and nutrition. Recent studies done by Oppong,²⁴ Abu,²⁵ Anker²⁶ and others²⁷ have clearly demonstrated these relationships. An enlightened, educated woman is a sure investment for the enlightened, healthy and productive development of the next generation.

E. Environment

54. Changes in agriculture, forestry, water and waste management all have local environmental implications for women as those who have a special relationship with the natural environment by virtue of the daily tasks.²⁸ Women are the primary natural resource managers in developing countries, yet this important role is often ignored by governments and agencies. They do most of the work to reap food and fuel from the environment to sustain their families. When the environment is degraded, it is the women who first feel the crunch.²⁹ Although the Arusha Strategies does not focus on women and environment, areas related to environment

²³ World Health Organization, Maternal Mortality Rates: A tabulation of available information - Geneva: WHO, 1985.

²⁴ Oppong, C., Sex Roles, Population and Development in West Africa, London Currey, 1988.

²⁵ Oppong, C/Abu, K., Ghanaian Mothers: Impact of Education, Migration and Employment (Women, Work and Development Series) Geneva: ILO, 1987.

²⁶ Anker, R/Hein, C., Anthropological Guides and Questionnaires for the Study of Demographic Changes and Women's Roles, Geneva: ILO, 1987.

²⁷ UNECA, African Training and Research Centre for Women, Women and the Industrial Development Decade in Africa - Addis Ababa, UNECA, 1986. (Research Series) E/ECA/ATRCW/86/05.

²⁸ COMPASS: Newsletter of the Society for International Development No. 39/40 May 1989.

²⁹ African Women in Development; UNEP News July - September 1988.

and where women are actively involved are recommended to include water, health, hygiene, sanitation and energy.

55. Most African countries have recognized the need to protect and improve the environment for sustained use. New measures and legislation have been passed in Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria for instance with regard to dumping of waste matters. Accordingly, a June (1988) agreement by the 16 nation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) called for tougher legislation to deter dumping.³⁰ In the area of energy, most countries have a government energy department or agency, underscoring the importance attached to energy issues which are all related to women concerns and involve women.

56. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) is one of the agencies involved in helping solve the energy crisis. In 1987, INSTRAW launched a project to promote women's involvement in energy programmes in Africa within the framework of programmes funded by the African Bureau of the United Nations Development Programmes. To this end, INSTRAW has undertaken an energy survey to six countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mali and Zambia. The survey has shown a wide range of activities in newer forms of renewable energy but little in-depth usage. Most of the countries surveyed are experimenting with biogas. Improved charcoal-making is widely studied in Malawi, Ghana and Guinea, although there are many economic barriers to commercialization.

57. Many African women organizations have been involved in various activities aimed at protecting and improving the environment for sustained use. In East Africa, the Kenya's Greenbelt Movement is a typical example. The movement has successfully mobilized more than half a million children and 500 women's groups.³¹ In Burkina Faso the Association Six "s" has more than 700 village groups involved in environmentally sound small-scale projects in water conservation, afforestation and grain storage. In Zimbabwe, the Association of women's clubs is prominent as a rural promoter of food and energy self-sufficiency.

58. Efforts to formulate plans of action for community water supply and sanitation as part of the implementation of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade as well as the strategies (IDWSSD) have been made by African governments. These activities include rural water supply systems using hand-pumped as well as piped gravity systems. These are being operated and maintained by communities in countries such as Burkina Faso, Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda.³² Furthermore, some countries have made progress by increasing their budget allocation for water supply.

³⁰ UNEP News. Ibid.; p. 10.

³¹ Op.Cit.;

³² UNICEF Within Human Reach: A Future for Africa's Children. UNICEF Report 1985.

59. Despite these positive signs, much remains to be done. Funding limitations, operation and maintenance, lack of trained personnel at the professional and para-professional levels and inadequate cost recovery policies should be considered and strategies to overcome these serious constraints planned. Since governments have and continue to be committed to the activities and attainment of the IDWSSD goals as well as to the long-term objectives of the Arusha and Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, more attention for the protection and improvement of the environment for sustained use, for water and sanitation activities be placed more to the underserved and rural population the majority of whom are the women and the children.

F. Women at the Decision-Making Level and Political Participation

60. The visible and public exercise of power by women is controversial in many societies. In most African countries, participation of women in economic decision-making, management and in politics is very low. This low participation has been reported in many reviews, research studies and reports. Political participation is a key issue for women because it is an indicator of their status as well as a tool to improve their socio-economic conditions in society.

61. In the majority of African countries, women have the right to vote and are eligible for election to public office where they can exercise all public functions. However, despite this equality of political rights in law, women still play a minor political role at all levels. Accordingly, the right to vote and the mere act of voting cannot be regarded as a measure of political consciousness or participation.

62. This review on the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies according to various reports, data and information made available during this period (1984-1989) shows that there has been an increase in the number of women entering the arena of decision-making and power. In countries such as Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Swaziland, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, women are politically represented in various government structures and committees ranging from the village/district level to the central government level. Besides their participation in political parties, committees, etc., more and more women are being appointed to key positions both in the public and private sectors. In Senegal, for example, women participate in all levels of decision-making: governmental, parliamentary, diplomatic and community.³³

63. This increase of women's participation in decision-making level is further seen in the case of Tanzania where in the general election of 1985, 25 out of 244 seats were filled by women members of parliament. In order to encourage women exercise their political rights and to enlighten the general mass on the importance of involving women in politics, the Party and Government decided to reserve 15

³³ ECA/MULPOC/NIA/87/V/WD, March 1987.

parliamentary seats for women.³⁴ In Madagascar, a good number of women occupy key positions at the decision-making level in legislative bodies as well as in elective posts.³⁵

64. In high public office, the situation of women has not changed much though there has been an increase of women as judges, directors of institutions, commissioners, permanent secretaries, managers, ambassadors and ministers. Women's participation in top management of large productive enterprises, whether in the public or private domain is therefore infrequent.

65. Women's organizations have also played a major role during the past five years in mobilizing women for participation in national development. In some countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania and Zambia, women's organizations have been given political backing through recognition as national mass organizations.³⁶ At the international level, the participation of women in international affairs has increased. This is evidenced by their participation in major international and regional meetings as well as advisers to various regional and international organizations and committees.

66. Albeit there has been an increase in the number of women entering the arena of decision making and power as shown in the review above, their success has, however not been easy. They had and still have to struggle against considerable odds in order to succeed in politics as well as getting into key positions in the government structure, parastatal organizations and institutions. The situation of women at the decision-making level is therefore far from being satisfactory as compared to men.

67. Factors affecting women's participation in politics include: resources, time, skill, experience, patronage, contacts and information. Women are at a disadvantage with regard to all of these factors that promote success in politics. Participation of women requires both human and financial resources as well as attitudinal change on the part of the society towards women's participation in political and administrative positions that require decision-making.

³⁴ Tanzania response to ECA/ATRCW questionnaire on: Changing Socio-economic Conditions of Women in Africa, March 1988.

³⁵ Madagascar response to ECA/ATRCW questionnaire on: Changing Socio-Economic Conditions of Women in Africa, July 1988.

³⁶ Review and Appraisal of the Achievement of United Nations Decade for Women, 1976 - 1985. E/ECA/RCIWD/OAU/4, August 1984.

68. Though there have been serious attempts to introduce affirmative action, variously defined as "equality policies" or "positive action".³⁷ (ILO/INSTRAW) to enhance the status and promote the full integration of women into political and economic systems, the situation is far from changing. Governments should take into account that women are equal partners with men, that their participation in politics and in economic decision-making is crucial in development and that women are an economic asset whose contribution should be sufficiently acknowledged and utilized.

IV. LAW AND LEGISLATION

69. For the purpose of this review, the word law is here taken to comprise not only constitutions, legislation, administrative regulations, executive decrees or judicial decision, but also all of the governmental decisions that are put into official form and translated into action. In addition, significance is attached to customary law which clearly differs from positive law. Thus, any compilation and analysis of laws concerning the status of women must cover also a situation where, despite the appearance of equality between the sexes in the formal law, discrimination remains in effect.³⁸

70. Albeit the review given below do not constitute a comprehensive Africa-wide data base that would permit an in-depth analysis of the crucial aspects of the women legal status according to the Arusha Strategies, nevertheless, examples given in this review show some of the actions member states have initiated and continue to initiate in order to improve the legal status of women in Africa.

71. Progress in achieving equality in economic and social participation, as set out in the Arusha and Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women has been very slow. At the international level, the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women (General Assembly Resolution 34/180) has been signed by most member states and ratified by two thirds of them and several major conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) have been widely accepted.³⁹ In Africa, 49 per cent of African States have ratified the convention as of September 1987.

72. At the national level, a review of progress made since the adoption of the Arusha Strategies shows that there has been some progress although perhaps at a slower pace in adjusting national legislation. Many member states have enacted reforms to ensure that women have equal opportunities to participate in economic

³⁷ ILO/INSTRAW Women in Economic Activity: A Global Statistical Survey (1950-2000) June 1985.

³⁸ Law and the Status of Women: An International Symposium Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations. Ed. by the Columbia Human Rights Law Review, Columbia University School of Law (1977).

³⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council. Report of the Secretary-General E/CN.6/1989/5, February 1989.

and social life. These efforts can be assessed through the promulgation of national legislation on employment, maternity leave, marriage, inheritance and property, education and constitutional rights. For instance, the Zimbabwe Government introduced the Labour Relations Act 1985 which embraces the provisions of the equal pay regulations, the minimum wages act and the maternity leave regulations of 1980; the matrimonial Causes Act 1985 which recognizes, for the first time in the history of Zimbabwe the direct and indirect contribution of a woman to family wealth.⁴⁰

73. Legal committees have been established by several African governments to study areas such as legislation, laws and traditions, customary laws and traditions that affect the progress and development of women, regulations and administrative instruction that affect women, and legal aid for women. In many countries, it has been observed that most women in Africa have neither the knowledge of law nor the ability to appeal to the law when it comes to their rights.

74. The above has necessitated in some countries like the United Republic of Tanzania, Mauritius and Malawi, the establishment of legal aid committees which offer legal advice to women. Family law advisory and educational programmes have also been established in some countries to help women understand their rights and to help resolve family situations. The Ghana Law Reform Commission on new family laws enacted during 1986, for instance, aims at promoting a uniform system of marriage in the country, irrespective of traditional or ethnic groupings.⁴¹ Other measures taken in countries such as Cameroon include the creation of legal conditions conducive to the progress of women by eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and by guaranteeing them equal opportunities in the political, economic, social and cultural sectors.⁴² In line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Mauritius for example has taken action by setting up a Sex Discrimination Committee to make an inventory of all sex discriminatory laws, practices and regulations as well as to study the provisions of the Convention in order to advise on the legislation that need to be enacted or amended to give effect thereto.⁴³ While in Botswana a Law Reform Committee has been established to look into the law and legislation in particular as they relate to women.

75. As regards customary law, some countries have taken steps to remove the mandatory application of customary law, which is inherently discriminatory against

⁴⁰ Zimbabwe country paper presented to the fifth meeting of the sub-regional co-ordinating committee on the Integration of Women in Development ECA/Lusaka MULPOC, Feb. 1987.

⁴¹ Report of the Sub-Regional Committee for the Integration of Women in Development, MULPOC/VAO/S/CSR, March 1987.

⁴² Ibid.;

⁴³ ECA/ATRCW, Update No. 9, December 1987, p. 9.

women from some disputes. This is still so because the legislation process do not completely bridge the gaps left by the customary law.

76. National fiscal, monetary and property laws often result in discriminatory practices depriving women of access to resources. In some countries such as Botswana, women who marry in community of property, are regulated to a minority status, and they cannot contract or sign any legal document without the assistance of their husbands. It is on the basis of this and other factors that women are denied of credits/loans by banks.

77. It is evident from the review that not significant advances have been made in reducing the legal bases of discrimination against women. Legal discrimination on the basis of sex still exists in some countries. Since the constitutions serve as the superstructure upon which government's legislation and policy rest, such a policy cannot create a proper legal environment that permits women to contribute to and benefit from development. The issue of changing socio-economic conditions of women in Africa includes legal aspects and that the economic and social structures are influenced by the law and are interrelated. Law cut across all areas of national development such as employment, education, health, food and agriculture, population and the like. In order to ensure equal participation of women in the economic and social life, a concerted effort to achieve reforms at every level and in every sound sector of development is required.

V. THE ROLE OF NGOS, REGIONAL ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES

78. Non-governmental organizations have played and continue to play a great role in publicizing and implementing the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies. Their activities include among others, research studies, collection of data, production of training manuals, training workshops, seminars and holding conferences and meetings at local, national and international levels to bring women's issues to the public's attention.

(a) African National NGOs

79. A lot of non-governmental organizations have emerged particularly following the end of the UN Decade for Women (1985). These NGOs' range from professional associations, co-operatives, religious organizations to general purpose organizations. These organizations continue to supplement government efforts in bringing about development in the country and ensuring further the integration of women in the development process.

80. Through the support of governments by provision of technical services and in some cases financial support, these NGOs are engaged in activities such as: fund raising to support girls education at different levels; leadership in skilled training; building of nursery schools; bus shelters; health centres; giving inputs to income generating activities; and environmental projects including soil conservation and energy saving projects. Many of these organizations are grassroot oriented having influence in the rural area. However, despite the crucial role these organizations are playing, most of them lack the organizational structures and financial support.

Given both financial and human resources as well as the organizational structure, NGOs have the potential for growth and effective implementation of the Strategies.

(b) Governmental Agencies

81. Governmental agencies, organizations and foundations operating in the various respective countries of Africa have recognized the need to assist and give support to women in development (WID) activities. Their major objectives (within the framework of country, programmes) to WID are to improve women's living and working conditions; providing opportunities to participate in economic, cultural and political activities with a view to change the mainstream of development to make it benefit women; carry out research in areas such as the informal and agro-industry sectors; and other activities related to social services including support to day-care nursery schools, training programmes for specific skills and the like.

82. Following the World Conference in Nairobi (1985) agencies such as: Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA), the Danish Development Agency (DANIDA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), OXFAM and Ford Foundation among others have provided and continue to provide both human and financial resources as well as equipment and required facilities to run women's projects.

83. Such assistance has been and is channelled through government appropriate ministries, institutions and other bodies to ensure effective monitoring and co-ordination. In the context of Arusha and Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, activities initiated and being implemented through the assistance received from the above such agencies include: training, agricultural projects, credit scheme, women's appropriate food technology, research in informal and agro-industry sectors, grinding mills and other income generation activities. In general, the 1985 World Conference has ushered women's issues into a new era with a large number of women's projects most of which are financed by various international donors.

(c) Sub-Regional Organizations/Institutions

(i) Sub-Regional Organizations

84. Sub-regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Preferential Trade Areas (PTA) and the Southern African Development Co-ordination Committee (SADCC) have equally given attention to women issues though the Treaties/constitutions establishing them have no special provision for women. However, women are one of the social categories whose problems are linked to the Social and Economic Development of the sub-regions.

85. For instance, ECOWAS recognises that women have an especially important role to play in the development of West Africa in particular and Africa as a whole, and as such, it fully supports the total and complete integration of women in all forms of the development process. In view of this, ECOWAS created in 1987 a West African Women's Association (WAWA). According to the statutes of the Association,

the objectives of the Association among others shall be to: mobilize and involve women of the sub-region in community-building efforts; initiate community projects in the priority sectors of Agriculture, Trade, desertification control, health, education and others; foster sub-regional cooperation with a view to accelerating the economic, social and cultural integration of the community and securing a better future for the people.⁴⁴ The WAWA programme of activities include: organization of symposia and seminars, research programmes, information dissemination, monitoring and evaluation of WID activities in the sub-region.

86. As regards to SADCC for instance, Zimbabwe hosted in 1986 the SADCC Women's Conference which discussed the implementation of the Strategies at the subregional level. Plans for a machinery to co-ordinate women and development within SADCC are at an advance stage.

(ii) Subregional and National Institutions

87. Subregional and national institutions for training and research have given attention to women issues and have initiated programmes and projects pertaining to women. The Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI) for instance has a women in development (WID) unit. Since the adoption of the Arusha Strategies, ESAMI has played and continue to play a role in promoting training of women managers and entrepreneurs to increase their participation in national economies. With the financial support of UNDP and the Netherlands government, ESAMI has conducted a series of workshops for trainers of women entrepreneurs and seminars on women entrepreneurs. These workshops and seminars are aimed at enabling women to have the opportunity to develop both personal and technical entrepreneurial skills which enable them to improve their small-scale enterprise performance.

88. National training and research institutions have also made significant contributions on women in development activities. A good number of universities and research institutes have undertaken research on a variety of areas such as income generation for women, sex differences in education, population, agriculture extension services and the like. Some universities are teaching courses on women and development while dimensions on women issues are being reflected in courses such as anthropology, sociology, law, population and others. However, despite these initiatives and contribution made so far, universities and research institutes should consider extending their programmes to incorporate various university programme activities relative to gender issues.

VI. THE ROLE OF THE AFRICAN TRAINING AND RESEARCH CENTRE FOR WOMEN (ATRCW) IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARUSHA STRATEGIES

89. ATRCW is the regional women in development structure in the United Nations system in Africa. As an integral part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ATRCW has made a viable contribution to the Women in Development

⁴⁴ Economic Community of West African States: West African Women Associations - Statutes: Article Three, The Aims and Objectives of the Association.

(WID) programmes in the region. Following the adoption of the Arusha Strategies, ATRCW has continued to promote the advancement of women in development by: providing technical and advisory services to member states in the formulation of policies and programmes designed to mobilize, develop and utilize the capabilities of women for achieving national and regional development objectives; dissemination of information for the advancement of women and the like. Specifically ATRCW activities have included the following:

(a) At the Sub-Regional Level

90. The activities of the West and Central African subregion have during the 1986-1987 period focused on the role of women in the distribution of foodstuffs, training and research activities in agriculture, food and appropriate food technologies and marketing of processed food. In East and Southern Africa, within the same period, attention was given to health issues such as water and sanitation, development and management of small-scale enterprises and strengthening the technical capabilities of national machineries, while North Africa and the Great Lakes countries were concerned with the legal status of women, strengthening national machineries for women in development as well as techniques in project planning, implementation and evaluation.

91. Within the subregions, activities have also included National Technical Co-operation Assessment and Programmes (NATCAPs) and Round Table Conferences have been conducted. NATCAPs have aimed at identifying higher priority technical co-operation programmes and projects as well as assessing and specifying constraints and priorities for meeting development and human resources capabilities.

(b) Monitoring the Socio-Economic Conditions

92. In consideration of the current emerging economic and social trends in the region and in the efforts to implement the Arusha Strategies, ATRCW has carried and continue to undertake activities which include: monitoring changes in the situation of African women in the context of the Arusha and the Nairobi Strategies; promoting women in small-scale enterprises with particular emphasis on improving the managerial capabilities of women; the role of women in the informal sector and access of women to scientific and technical fields; enhancing the capacity of national machineries to incorporate gender issues in national development plans and strategies; sectoral analysis of emerging socio-economic trends and their impact on African women, in particular the effect of persistent famine and drought on women as food producers, the effect of structural adjustment programmes on vulnerable groups (such as rural and urban poor women); and ensuring women's distinct contribution and needs are taken into account in major regional strategies and policies promulgated from time to time amongst others.

93. On account of the above, ATRCW has tackled the activities from different angles and through systematic studies designed to promote and improve the socio-economic conditions of women. To this end, studies, training workshops (national and subregional), meetings and seminars have been held. For instance, studies undertaken include among others: a study on the present need for strengthening

national machineries for the integration of women in development was undertaken in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia in 1986; study on women as entrepreneurs was undertaken in Zambia, Cameroon and Ghana in 1986; studies on women in the informal sector and agro-industries (1988) and (1989); study on the participation of women in development both as agents and beneficiaries in Ghana in 1987; study and training in optimal nutritional use of food donated for relief and food for work activities in Ethiopia; studies on promoting women in the scientific professions have also been undertaken in Kenya, Sierra Leone and Swaziland in 1988. A study tour to Ghana for Business Women from Eastern and Southern Africa was also conducted in 1987.

94. In its efforts to improve the working conditions of women, a project on improving women's access to credit as recommended in the Arusha Strategies is being implemented. Funded by SIDA, the project involves research, training programmes in management, credit techniques and pilot projects in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Zambia. Research competition for women in Eastern and Southern Africa in the area of informal and agro-industry sectors is also underway with 10 women researchers being awarded to undertake research. This has been made possible under Ford Foundation grant.

95. As regards to the incorporation of women's issues and concern in national development plans, an Expert Group meeting was held in Addis Ababa in November 1988. The meeting's objective was to review development planning both in economic and equity matters, and the extent to which women concerns have been taken into consideration in national development plans. The Experts agreed on the various chapters and indicators for inclusion in the guidelines for incorporation of women concerns into national development plans. These guidelines are being developed and will be disseminated for use by national machineries, organizations and institutions concerned and involved in Women in Development.

(c) Information on Women in Africa

96. Considering the importance of information needs and resources on women in Africa, ATRCW in collaboration with Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS) and UNIFEM organized an Expert Group Meeting on the establishment of a Data Base on Women and Development in Africa and was held in May 1989 in Addis Ababa. Attended by experts from 13 countries in Africa and observers from UN Agencies, the meeting aimed at assessing the needs for information on women and development in the region; examining existing information system networks; as well as determining the appropriateness and feasibility of a proposed mode on the establishment of a Data Base on women in Africa. The meeting recommended the establishment of a data bank and women's information network for Africa whose proposal is currently under consideration. Botswana and Tanzania among other countries are undertaking similar initiatives to establish national data bank on women.

97. With regard to meetings and seminars, a sub-regional seminar on improving women's management skills was organized for French-speaking African countries and held in Douala-Cameroon in December 1988, while a similar one for the English-Speaking African countries was held in 1987. Two evaluation missions were

undertaken to Egypt and Botswana to examine the extent to which the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies were being taken into account within national programmes and concerns of women in development.

98. In addition to the activities undertaken by ATRCW, other substantive divisions of the ECA have incorporated women's issues in their work programme. The activities have included among others: studies, seminars, publications and dissemination of information. For instance, during the period under review, the activities of ECA/FAO Joint Division have included case studies on the role of women in agriculture production in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali the Niger and Senegal. The International Trade and Finance Division organized a regional seminar on Women and Domestic Trade in Africa which was held in Niamey Niger in March 1988. The ECA/MULPOCs have also continued to promote the advancement of women in the respective countries of the subregions.

99. ATRCW also services various regional and subregional structures set up to promote programmes for women. These structures are: The Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) and the subregional committees for the Integration of Women in Development. ARCC is a subsidiary organ of the Economic Commission for Africa. Since its establishment in 1979, ARCC has continued to promote the advancement of women in Africa in the social, economic, political and cultural fields.

100. During the period under review, ARCC's activities and achievements include amongst others: the promotion of African women to participate in the decision-making process at national, subregional and regional levels; mobilizing resources for women from donors as well as from the African member States through pledges to the United Nations Trust Fund for Africa Development (UNTFAD); mobilizing and preparing African governments for an effective participation in the Regional and World Conference in Arusha 1984 and Nairobi 1985.

101. At the subregional level, the Subregional Committees for the Integration of Women in Development have continued to promote and co-ordinate WID activities within the respective countries of the subregions. The Committees have reviewed programmes and proposals submitted by national commissions on women and development or other similar bodies in the subregion with a view to mobilize resources for programmes implementation. Since the adoption of the Strategies in 1984, the Committees have monitored the activities of the women's programme undertaken by the MULPOCs in their respective subregions and report to the executive organs of the ECA/MULPOCs.

102. In Looking into the future, ATRCW's activities will give attention to women in agricultural, social and industrial sectors, human resources, transport, international and intra-African trade and population. ECA also plans to undertake activities to benefit young women faced with the problem of teen-age pregnancy amongst others. Meanwhile, financial and human resources continue to be major problems and constraints in the implementation of the Strategies.

VII. THE ROLE OF THE UN AGENCIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES

103. The bodies of the UN system and the specialized agencies and other institutions have increasingly continued to emphasize the need to involve women in the design and implementation of development programmes so as to make them more active and effective participants in economic activities. The following highlights the activities initiated by various UN agencies in Africa for the implementation of the Arusha (1984) and Nairobi (1985) Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women according to the information made available to ECA by the respective agencies, namely: UNIFEM, UNEP, UNIDO, UNFPA, UNHCR, FAO and WHO.

(a) UNIFEM

104. Since the adoption of the Arusha Strategies (October 1984) the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has initiated a number of projects and activities with emphasis given to agriculture and food security, credit and mainstreaming programmes. This UNIFEM review features the implementation of the African Investment Plan (AIP) which, in line with the priority needs of the region, has strengthened the capacity of:

- i) Food cycle technologies and African women farmers;
- ii) NGOs to promote food security;
- iii) Credit support systems;
- iv) Regional and national institutions for programming and planning for WID.

105. The African Investment Plan has been adjusted (1989) in light of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD 1986-1990) and in response to the economic crisis. The following paragraphs provide an account of key activities carried out by UNIFEM since the adoption of the Arusha Strategies in accordance with the priorities given above.

106. (i) Women and Food Cycle technologies (WAFT) programme. Supported by the Governments of Canada, Italy and the Netherlands, it has been operational since April, 1987. The programme aims at the widespread dissemination of tested technologies, with a training and credit package to increase the productivity of women food producers, processors and marketers. Already, a number of such projects have become operational in Senegal, Gabon, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Tanzania.

107. (ii) Co-operation with NGOs to Promote Food Security. Because NGOs have a practical association at the grassroots level with women farmers, they can play a significant role in directing aid through programmes specifically organized for women. Because of this and many other factors, UNIFEM's partnership with NGOs

has increased steadily over the past few years. For instance, in Rwanda, the NGO - INADES is involved in agricultural training to more women groups; in Togo, the NGO - Opportunities Industrialization Center will provide training in modern agricultural techniques to young women. NGOs on the continent are being encouraged to become involved in the food security issues; the strategy on Food Security adopted by the African Federation of Business and Professional Women's Workshop in Accra-Ghana in January 1989, is a good example.

108. (iii) Credit Support Systems (CRESS). As stipulated in the Arusha Strategies, access to credit is one of UNIFEM's major objective. The provision of credit and support services to rural and poor urban women serves not only as an entry point for other social interventions, but increases the value of their labour output. Because of this and many other factors, UNIFEM has taken concrete steps to implement its credit specialization efforts. A global credit project has been drafted, and a regional credit project in collaboration with RBA/UNDP for Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Congo and Zambia is to be implemented. At the request of the government of Tanzania, UNIFEM identified and formulated a larger-scale credit project of a national character.

109. The demand for credit programmes for rural women is increasing faster than the resources of the Fund is able to meet. Besides the credit projects enumerated above, four (4) more requests are in the pipeline, two of these requested by Ministers of Women's Affairs in their respective countries. In the biennium, UNIFEM will collaborate with the African Development Bank to sensitize staff of national development banks on matters related to credit for women's enterprises. Credit components are also gaining prevalence in regular projects. Small scale credit loans to women has become a fast-growing activity within many UNIFEM - assisted projects and will continue to be viewed as a vital component in all production-oriented projects, particularly in relation to the focus on micro-enterprise development during the biennium.

110. From UNIFEM's field missions on credit project, it has been observed that governments, interested banks and financial institutions, donor agencies and NGOs want to see credit methodologies developed. They want to know how to go about developing them. Some of them feel that the supply side of the credit may not be a problem; the critical problems are how to deliver and recover credit, how to forge linkages between rural women and banks and how to reach and prepare women. It has also been observed that some countries have taken policy measures to ration credit to women and other disadvantaged groups. However, policy measures should be backed by credit delivery-receiving-recovery mechanisms, and those countries without policy measures wish to see what can be done.

111. One of the priorities in this sector is the preparation of UNIFEM's Revolving Loan Fund guidelines for use by Programme officers at Headquarters and in field offices. The proposed guidelines would mainly be based on the experience of UNIFEM with RLFs, which include a wide spectrum of management systems, credit delivery-recovery mechanisms, target groups, credit demand and supply, savings mobilizations potentials and national contacts.

112. (iv) Mainstream programming initiatives. Women needs should be linked with mainstream issue (e.g. environment, degradation, food security, population, participation) not just by pushing women into the mainstream, but by enabling women to create demands at the micro level, which stimulate responses at the macro level in a productive and strategic way, so that decision makers will be required not only to take women into account, but will be required to take women into their midst.

113. Between 1985 and 1988, UNIFEM's mainstreaming initiatives have been directed mainly at three target or categories of institutions and issues:

(a) Leveraging resources and attracting financing for women from large financial institutions, multilateral and bilateral sources of support for development work;

(b) Analyzing the impact of macro-economic policies, especially structural adjustment;

(c) Sensitizing large bureaucracies to the gender dimension in technical cooperation projects.

114. With the operationalization of the Fund's Mainstream Development Initiatives Facility (MDIF), which will meet the costs of Women in Development Specialists' participation in relevant missions, it will be possible to respond to more requests for UNIFEM expertise for mainstream programming. A major mainstreaming effort has been the work with the SADCC Secretariat and Co-ordinating Units in assisting them to increase their capacity to deal with WID issues. Similarly, efforts will be directed at the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS).

115. The Biennium will witness a consolidation of UNIFEM's initiatives in Africa. Work will continue at the level of strengthening the countries and governments, NGOs to fully understand the WID concept and develop their own internal capacity; and above all, building the various linkages between those involved in WID programming.

(b) UNEP

116. In the area of environment, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) activities related specifically to women include the following programmes: In December 1988, UNEP supported a symposium organized by the Scientific Association of Arab Women entitled "The Environment Protection of the River Nile Basin: Role of Women" where links between population and natural resource levels were stressed.

117. The role of women in sustainable development became a key issue in February 1989, when UNEP instigated and supported jointly with Canada and Finland, the convening of a Women African Assembly on Sustainable Development in Harare. The meeting recognized that although women did almost all of the work in Africa to provide food, energy and water for the family, men still remain in control of agricultural planning. A similar Assembly is being prepared for the Arab States.

118. The UNEP Senior Women Advisory group (SWAG) has been increasingly involved in international meetings and fora. The SWAG member in Ghana has, for instance ensured that women at grassroot level participate in the pilot-village projects developed within the Cairo Plan of Action. Other SWAG members have been instrumental, through their action at government level, in the development of environmental legislation in such fields of ozone protection and hazardous waste, affecting women, men and children. SWAG strives to create a market place of ideas and solutions a women's "brainbank" from which information can be both withdrawn and deposited.

119. Within its Desertification Control Program, UNEP in cooperation with UNESCO, supported a seminar on "The Role of Women in Pastoral and agro-pastoral societies in the improvement and management of arid and semi-arid reserves in Africa South of the Sahara", in April 1989 in Dakar. The seminar aimed at increasing women's access to training and technology to combat famine and food scarcity in these areas of depleted natural resources.

120. In the process of implementation, major constraints UNEP has experienced relate to the difficulty of reaching African women at grassroot level and of raising their awareness to environmental issues. The problem of women's isolation, lack of decision making responsibility and positions of power have proven to be a hinderance to combating environmental degradation. A general observation and concern that has been repeatedly raised is the lack of data and statistical information relating to women in the environment sector.

121. As regards the future, UNEP's concern is to support programmes at local levels which would empower women and their organizations in the fight against depletion of vital resources. It is UNEP's concern that all women, both urban professionals and rural poor, need to be educated about natural resource conservation issues.

(c) UNIDO

122. In 1986, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) established a unit for the integration of women into Industrial Development in the Department of Programme and Project Development to develop, promote and co-ordinate the Secretariat's activities for the integration of women. In this line, efforts are undertaken to give consideration to the role of women in technical co-operation projects, study and research activities, particularly those dealing with agro-industry and small scale industry promotion. Secondly, projects and programmes specifically targeting women are being formulated and implemented.

123. Hence, UNIDO's activities for the integration of women into industrial development in Africa can be divided into three categories:

- (i) Advisory services to governments on policy-measures and specific projects to promote the integration of women in industrial development. To this end, advisory missions have been undertaken to Guinea and Chad. Similar advisory missions are foreseen to Cameroon, Senegal and Zaire.

- (ii) Development and dissemination of appropriate food processing technologies for rural women. Exploratory missions to Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo have been undertaken to survey technologies used by rural women in these countries. Other exploratory missions have been undertaken to Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal to look into drying techniques used by rural women for fruits and vegetables. As a result, a project proposal has been formulated to upgrade the drying process from the current traditional level to a commercially exploitable production process. The project will be initiated in Senegal under a Trust Fund Management with the Government of Japan. Under the Trust Fund contribution from the Government of Japan, a pilot fruit processing plant for rural women at cottage industry level is being installed in Zambia.
- (iii) Category three of the activities involve entrepreneurial and managerial skill development for women entrepreneurs. A project to provide business advisory services to women is under implementation in Malawi. The project aims, inter alia, at co-ordinating the activities of organizations and institutions involved in small- and medium-scale enterprises, and sensitizing them to women's needs.

124. As regards to training, UNIDO, in co-operation with the Pan-African Institute for Development - Eastern and Southern Africa (PAID-ESA), has developed a training programme in food processing for women entrepreneurs under a Trust Fund Agreement with the Government of Norway. The programme concentrates on three elements - entrepreneurship management and food processing technology. The programme is intended to be implemented also in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania.

125. During the Medium-Term Plan Period 1990-1995 UNIDO will continue to provide assistance, upon request, to African governments as stated above as long as the necessary resources can be secured from bilateral and multilateral donors. In addition, efforts will be undertaken to give full consideration to the role and contribution of women in UNIDO's technical co-operation projects in Africa, particularly in those relating to industrial planning, small-scale industry promotion, agro-industries and human resource development.

(d) UNFPA

126. Within its mandate for population activities, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues to extend its efforts in supporting projects specifically designed to improve the status of women and ensuring that all projects take the interests and the role of women fully into account in their design, appraisal and implementation.

127. In response to the recommendations of the 1984 Mexico International Conference on Population and the Forward-Looking Strategies adopted in 1985, UNFPA has initiated several operation measures to give effects to its mandate and policy objectives. In 1985, the Fund established a Special Unit for Women,

population and Development whose function is to co-ordinate and monitor the Fund's WID activities as well as playing a promotional advocacy role and providing technical backstopping and project support.

128. In 1987, the Fund adopted the Plan of Action for Sub-Saharan Africa. The priority areas in the Plan of Action include:

- (i) intensification of training opportunities for women;
- (ii) strengthening of institutional and human resources to facilitate a more systematic approach to the integration of women in population and development;
- (iii) strengthening of data bases through expansion of the Population Information Network for Africa (POPIN-Africa), and the production of country profiles on women;
- (iv) promotion of policies for improving the status of women; and
- (v) dissemination of information to both men and women on population matters.

129. Women have benefitted from all sectoral activities supported by the Fund, particularly in the areas of MCH/FP, IEC, Data Collection and from special projects for women. Examples on this include: training of trainers to strengthen the teaching of MCH/FP in medico-sanitary institutions in Cameroon; training of nurses as trainers for service providers and TRAs in Nigeria; in Liberia and Malawi; women have received training in demography; in Sudan women have been trained in census organization and sampling methods; in Tanzania, Mozambique and Liberia population messages dissemination under the IEC projects; in Ghana and Gabon, financial resources were made available to grass-roots level women's organizations; and other projects addressing women's productive and reproductive roles have been initiated in collaboration with other UN agencies.

130. Efforts have also been made to strengthen the capacity of institutions including women's bureaux and NGOs responsible for the advancement of women in countries such as Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Angola and Central African Republic. Between 1987-1988, the Fund provided assistance to at least ten Sub-Saharan African countries namely: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Tanzania to conduct national population censuses.

131. Despite these projects and activities which women have benefitted from, problems UNFPA has encountered in the integration of women in the population and development process include among others: the lack of consultation with women in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of projects; the poor accessibility to women, particularly rural women, of MCH/FP services; the difficulty in recruiting women for training in specialized or non-traditional fields; the lack of appropriate training materials and case studies relevant to the work of UNFPA.

132. For the future programme, UNFPA will focus on country-level WID training activities; improvement of programme and project planning and delivery from the women's perspective, institution building with emphasis on women's NGOs; data collection, the establishment of national advisory panels on women, and collaboration with other UN agencies on the issue of: project planning and delivery from the women's perspective, institution building with emphasis on women's NGOs; data collection, the establishment of national advisory panels on women, and collaboration with other UN agencies on the issue of structural adjustment and its impact on African women.

(e) UNHCR

133. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has initiated measures/programmes to implement the Arusha/Nairobi Strategies. These programmes include areas such as protection, education, health/nutrition, income-generating activities, energy and water.

134. Protection for refugee women is carried out, through measures intended to ensure that women's rights are respected. In Djibouti for instance, the Branch office has included special shelter which provides safety against abuse, and in Malawi, a camp administrator has been added to the staff to closely monitor the situation in the camp due to reports of abduction and rape.

135. In the area of education, UNHCR's programme has given opportunities to refugee women in adult education, vocational training and skills development activities. In Somalia for example, women have received training in Family Life Programme (FLP) while a special programme has been developed aimed at training teenagers in basic skills. Literacy programmes have also been undertaken to facilitate access to employment opportunities and improve employment possibilities for women and girls to limit their risk of exploitation.

136. As regards health and nutrition, women refugees have benefited within the UNHCR overall health programme, especially from curative treatment for anemia often affecting pregnant and lactating mothers. In Botswana, for instance, the construction of a maternity ward has been completed to improve the delivery conditions of refugee women.

137. UNHCR has cooperated with the ILO, FAO and some NGOs in the planning and implementing income-generating projects for women refugees. In respect to these activities, assistance for women's small business has been given in Somalia and Sudan, among other countries. In providing self-sufficiency in food and agriculture, planned specific income generating projects for women are often coupled with participation in production and marketing activities in their respective communities. Seeds and farming implements are given by UNHCR and care has been taken to employ female agricultural extension workers.

138. Concerning energy and water, in certain refugee locations, afforestation projects and fuel efficient stoves have been introduced, thus contributing to UNHCR's Domestic Energy Policy to help plan fuel saving and the conservation of

domestic energy. Water supply and sanitation programmes include the installation of water supply systems and train women to maintain and repair them.

139. In assessing the impact these programmes have on the socio-economic conditions of women in Africa, UNHCR reports that the Refugee Health Unit (RHU) has had a strong impact on improving the situation of refugee women in Somalia through the supplementary feeding programme for expectant and lactating mothers. Self-sufficiency and income generating projects have provided refugee women with additional resources. Afforestation projects and the introduction of fuel-efficient stoves, also have had an important impact on improving the environment of host countries and the situation of refugee women.

140. Although significant steps have been taken by UNHCR to address the specific needs of refugee women as regards international protection, much still remains to be done. Many violations of their safety, dignity and integrity such as physical violence, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and discrimination continue to be reported. In the implementation process, UNHCR is faced with formidable problems such as lack of resources, lack of female staffing (especially in education and teaching), and cultural barriers. The latter constitute a hinderance to the field officers in terms of communication/information with refugee women.

141. In its intended long term future programmes UNHCR has formulated a detailed work-plan aimed at integrating refugee women's needs into the mainstream of UNHCR work. As UNHCR attempts to expand its programmes for women, the need for new and improved systems for the collection and maintenance of basic socio-economic and demographic data has become very important, without adequate data, effective and efficient planning for the refugee population at large, and for particular age and gender groups including women, becomes difficult or impossible. To this end, contacts have been initiated with the Statistical Office of the Department of International and Economic Affairs of UN with the objective of assisting UNHCR in improving its data gathering and analysis to cover basic refugee statistics by gender and age.

142. UNHCR is also now preparing to take the lead for one of the priority themes, "peace" at the Thirty-Fifth Session of the Commission on the status of women to be held in Vienna in 1991, which will address with the question of refugee and displaced women and children.

(f) FAO

143. The Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Rural Development presented to the twenty-fourth FAO Conference in November 1987 and approved by the FAO Council in November 1988, is the main instrument for the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies.

144. In compliance with the Strategies and pursuant to the mandate of the FAO Plan of Action, activities carried out in Africa extend to the following:

- (i) Recently formulated UNDP-funded project entitled "Improving African Women Farmers' Access to Appropriate Technologies" intends to cover

the following countries during the implementation of its first phase: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The major objective of this project is to increase the agricultural productivity through identification, dissemination and institutionalization of improved agricultural technology transfer which will benefit women farmers and thus enable them to be integrated effectively into the mainstream of agricultural and rural development programmes.

- (ii) FAO has given specific attention to re-orientation and strengthening of the curricula of training programmes for home- economics. A curriculum guidelines entitled "Rural Households, Resource Allocation and Management" has been distributed to selected institutions in Africa and Asia, to university and college level educators and those involved in programme planning, research and field practice related to agriculture and rural development. Two seminars will be held in Africa (Malawi and Nigeria) in 1989 to test these guidelines.

145. In June 1988, FAO held a Technical Consultation meeting on Population Activities Related to Rural Women in which Lesotho, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zimbabwe participated. The results of the meeting led to the following actions among others: integration of population concerns into on-going and pipeline Women in Food System (WIFS) projects; and development of Regional Programmes and integrated population, women and agricultural development country projects. Technical backstopping and advisory services have been provided to Zambia, and Uganda.

146. In the area of monitoring and evaluation, FAO has established a coding system to identify the extent to which the Regular Programme activities are oriented towards women. Efforts are also underway to establish a computer-based system for monitoring all field projects in this regard.

147. In general, FAO activities in the region in the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies have made progress in several fields. Among these include: greater knowledge and awareness of the contribution and importance of rural women in agriculture, forestry, fishery and food security; increase in the number of projects and amount of resources oriented towards rural women; development of conceptual approaches and operational alternatives, particularly with regard to: food security, technology, women and drought, credit and extension services to rural women; improvement of guidelines and checklists and their application at regional and national levels; and strengthening national level institutions and women's organizations.

148. As regards to constraints, problems and limitations experienced in the process of implementation, FAO reports that because of the recent years' financial crisis, the staff of the service in charge of women's programmes for example has been drastically reduced, thereby reducing its capacity of intervention. Therefore technical assistance to governments to promote regional programmes for women and to set up a regional policy on WID, has been very limited. Secondly, technical backstopping has only been given to on-going projects.

149. Referring to the intended long-term programme and pursuant to the Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development (1990-95), FAO's major objectives and commitments include: identification of research needs at global level and to orient national programmes to generate and mobilize resources for WiD; working on women in development policies and to promote them at national and international levels; and to review and monitor the national action women in development.

(d) WHO

150. Following the adoption of the NFES, the World Health Organization has undertaken and planned programme activities that are specifically aimed at improving the health of women in addition to those that relate equally to men and women.

151. WHO's programme on maternal and child health and family planning for instance, addresses the needs of women by means of a multi-faceted approach that aims at ensuring that pregnant women receive adequate antenatal care and have access to essential obstetric and gynecological care provided by trained health workers; that most births are attended by trained health workers; that the health infrastructure provides for access to family planning; and that there is intersectoral action to support the reproductive health of women.

152. In February 1987, an International Conference on Safe Motherhood co-sponsored by UNFPA, WHO and the World Bank was held in Nairobi. Long-term intersectoral strategies were recommended to improve the health and social status of women and girls, as well as to mobilize action to strengthen maternal health and family planning programmes. The key to the action on safe motherhood in collaboration with other interested parties includes continuation of advocacy; contribution to national and international policy makers; as well as women's organizations; training of various categories of health workers; and research.

153. To promote a healthy lifestyle in adolescents and to encourage maturity before childbearing, culture-sensitive strategies are being formulated and implemented to increase government and intersectoral awareness of and participation in promoting a delay in childbearing. Health systems research aimed at facilitating better utilization of family planning and antenatal services is also expanding.

154. In relation to the health and nutrition of women, WHO continues to focus on improving environmental conditions, reducing women's work-load, and promoting and strengthening social support measures that help women carry out their multiple roles. The Joint-WHO/UNICEF Nutrition Support Programme (JNSP) includes a focus on women's specific needs and the needs of those who are dependent on them. Measures are being taken to promote household food security, including the improvement of women access to resources and to their control. In general, WHO continues to promote the effective participation of women in development and in the achievement of the goal of health for all.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

155. The significance of the role of women in development has gained considerable attention in the last few years. National governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national, subregional and regional institutions and others have increasingly begun to emphasize the need to involve women in the design and implementation of development programmes so as to make them more active and effective participants in economic, social, political and cultural activities.

156. Secondly, the changes taking place in all developing countries are rapidly changing the position of women but not always for the better. For instance, despite their importance in agriculture and trading and their entry into the formal labour market in many countries, women are less economically secure than men, partly because their access to productive resources such as land, is still limited.

157. The issue of the integration of women in development is a long term process which will involve major social changes in current conceptual and attitudinal patterns. That African countries are prepared to embark on such a transformation in a positive sign which augurs well for the future.

158. In the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies, this review has shown that there have been some positive changes though at a slow pace. In the area of employment, recent data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other statistical data on the participation of women in the labour force show that there has been a spectacular increase in the number of working women during the past few years. However, despite this imperative gains in the labour market, women still carry a disproportionate share of unemployment in addition to specific constraints experienced by women as workers. To enhance women's participation in the employment sector, there is need to:

- (i) provide more opportunities for diversified training to enable women acquire the needed skills to branch out into other areas of the formal sector.
- (ii) improve the working conditions of women in the informal sector with attention given to reconstruction of physical facilities, water and sanitation services; access to productive facilities such as credit, marketing, food processing and training.
- (iii) formulate policy and legal reforms that would allow and enable women work in the informal sector and in other income-generation activities effectively.

159. As regards to education and training, our review has observed an increase in the enrolment of girls at all levels of the education system. Though, there has been modest progress in the level of participation of female students, low level of literacy still remain a major obstacles to women for participating fully in the development process. Education represents the basis upon which changes in societal attitudes can be affected. Changes in women's education must be seen in

terms of enabling women to secure employment, facilitating them to political and economic equal participation with men. In this respect among other things, government and international organizations should provide fellowships with focus given to the training of girls/women in priority areas of national development.

160. Another key issue observed in this review is the low participation of women in economic decision-making, management and in the political sector. Full and equal participation of women at the decision-making level is very important. Policies to enhance the role of women in development cannot be expected to succeed unless women take part in their implementation. They cannot realistically be implemented unless women participate in their management. The incidence and patterns of women's participation at the decision-making level need to be studied, with a view to identifying obstacles and strategies for overcoming the obstacles.

161. Changes have also emerged in the approach to women in development programmes. Today, there is a new buzzword in the women in development business, that is "mainstreaming". Several development agencies including UN agencies have now adopted a mainstreaming approach to WIDP. Among the agencies that are committed to mainstreaming WID include UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Bank. UNICEF for example has now adopted an expanded definition that supports not only women's nurturing/reproductive functions but also their needs and responsibilities as economic providers, food producers and community leaders. It emphasizes actions that offer synergistic benefits for both the well-being of women and children, and recognizes that giving women greater social and economic opportunities and control over finances has significant benefits for the health of children and society as a whole.

162. Today, the WID Division at the World Bank is mainstreaming WID through a combination of operational support and policy development, with operational responsibility for women and development resting with regional departments. In April 1987, UNDP created a Division for Women in Development in its Bureau for Programme, Policy and Evaluation with the objective of mainstreaming WID in UNDP's programme. The perspective is one of integrating WID into all aspects of development assistance. For mainstreaming and bridging strategies to be effective, the power of the gender variable must be widely accepted and translated into concrete action through a well-designed implementation strategy supported at the highest levels by development assistance agencies and governments.⁴⁵

163. Taking account of the long term objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, most of the activities undertaken and being initiated to implement the Arusha Strategies fall mainly in the area of development. In terms of equality though national machineries and other structures have been set up officially to advocate and push for equality, a lot still need to be done. National machineries need to be strengthened if they are to play their role effectively. Secondly, for effectiveness in influencing policy, national machineries should be located in the most powerful structure in the government,

⁴⁵ Kristen Timothy-Lankester: Through the Gender Lens: Reaching Women with Development Assistance. Equal Time November 1988.

i.e., President's or Prime Minister's office or Ministries of Finance and Economic Planning. Thirdly, human and financial resources should be adequately allocated to women's programmes. In the employment sector, in most cases women do not perform the same work and thus it is difficult to establish 'equal value' for which the same remuneration should be paid. Women still have lower skills because they have unequal access to education and training. In the rural area, women do not have equal access to land, education, technology, training and extension services, credit and other resources. There is still need to push for equality as equality will not come by unless women have equal access to land, education, technology and other resources. As regards peace, activities related to peace are generally undertaken at the national government level where women are not very much involved.

164. The relationship between sectoral/development activities and Equality in particular should be made more explicit. There may also be a need, accordingly, for further guidance to give sectoral/development activities a more precise definitional content as they relate to the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies other than development. There is need for further analysis to assess the implementation of the Arusha Strategies as well as the role of national machineries in the implementation process. For effective implementation, there is need to further enhance primarily through an intensification of existing practices, the overall policy formulation and monitoring functions of all bodies, organizations etc. involved as well as closer co-ordination and or exchange of information among organizations through existing focal points.

165. With the difficulties experienced so far by some member states and other agencies in the implementation of the Strategies, it might be a useful proposition for African policy-makers to find a forum, to define issues clearly and set attainable, realistic targets for the Region based on the realities of Africa's socio-economic development. Such an exercise is needed otherwise in another decade from now, we shall still have excuses for non-implementation based on "lack of technical skills for the integration of women's concerns in plans and programmes, the stereotyped and traditional role expectations of women, the lack of participation of women as decision-makers in planning, the lack of accurate data on women including research on women and cultural patterns related to fertility and the long-term effects of women's projects and other development programmes on women".⁴⁶ The Advancement of women should be seriously taken on as a matter of general, and not only gender concerns, after all, it is one of the ways by which all can benefit from progress.

⁴⁶ UNFPA, International Forum on Population Policies in Development Planning. Population Policies in Development Planning: An Information Note from UNFPA - Mexico City: 1987. (Doc. No. M/WD/E/11) para. 45.



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Distr.: LIMITED

E/ECA/ATRCW/RCIWD.4/4
27 October 1989

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ENGLISH

Original: FRENCH

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration
of Women in Development on the Implementation
of the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement
of Women in Africa

6-10 November 1989
Abuja, the Federal Republic of Nigeria

IMPROVING THE ROLE OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL
SECTOR: EMPLOYMENT-DEVELOPMENT: AFRICAN WOMEN AND
THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Introduction

1. African economies, whether open or planned, have a dual character whereby a more or less expanding and heterogeneous "modern" sector exists side by side with a rapidly changing rural sector.

2. The changes in the rural sector is characterized essentially by a process of deterioration of the entire socio-economic and cultural life, in which large numbers of people of both sexes migrate to the cities and other reception centres in Africa.

3. As matter of fact, the major problem faced by both urban and rural population in Africa is that of employment, particularly wage employment. It follows then that in Africa more than in any other underdeveloped society, the problem of employment should be considered in structural terms, in an effort to solve the problems of inequality: the imbalance between the economic zones of the same country, between the distribution of resources among the various sectors and among men and women. This is to say that the traditional characteristics of African economies and the expanding modern and traditional informal sector, express in a latent way, the response of the groups of people concerned, particularly women, to the growing poverty in Africa.

4. In Africa today, the reflection on the problem of employment, particularly employment of women, is hindered by the absence of statistical data on both the formal and informal sectors. The problem posed is not merely the technical difficulties in data collection in Africa, but much more. It is, in fact, the relationship between the State and the economically active population. Wage employment on its part, is recognized, known by both the State and by the society, whereas the informal sector, even when integrated in market activities, remain anonymous, obscure and illegal.

5. It is therefore important to make a distinction between the two concepts, because it is not enough to refine the tools for measuring the employment of women, so as to define the intricacies of it, various factors should be considered such as those defined by E. Hakiki-Talahiti¹.

- "Data on legitimized female activities, mainly wage employment, should be improved, taking into consideration that the best efforts can only yield the tip of the iceberg.
- Data on own-account activities (specific terms used by statisticians) which are not recognized socially, and are considered as underground and clandestine. Not only can quantitative data not be collected using the same methods as in the preceding case, besides, the possible results can neither be compared to the first, nor even be integrated jointly in any analysis. This is because they deal with radically different areas."

¹ E. Hakiki-Talahiti, in an AFARD report on research on African women: what type of methodology? Dakar, 1983, p. 25.

6. The lack of data on employment, and on female employment makes them anonymous in analyses on production, in income distribution and in the allocation of resources for development. What this points to, in the final analysis, is the absence of an employment policy, namely a policy for human resources utilization.

7. In fact, at present, most African countries are not in a position to instance a coherent, well-structured employment policy. Having an employment policy implies the existence of a wage earning class over a long period of time, accompanied by a variety of fringe benefits, (social benefits, possibilities for forming a trade union, etc).

8. It is, therefore, in a socio-economic environment, characterized almost continuously by an increasing population of young people, harsh climatic conditions, decline in the rate of growth of national economies, unreliable agriculture coupled with increasing dependence on the outside world to ensure survival of the people, and an industrial sector in near stagnation that African women have to constantly double their efforts in order to survive, make a living, provide the livelihood for, care for and educate their children and their families. In the current social context, the traditional system of pre-capitalist mode of production, which requires women and children to be the responsibility of the man, has almost collapsed or functions so inefficiently, because of poverty and unemployment, that women are obliged to resort to wage employment. A large army of female workers is emerging, although these women are still unrecognized on the employment market which is increasingly unable to absorb them.

9. The theoretical thinking on female employment, in France, for example, shows that its development and structure is seen as "the distribution of the female work force between the industrial reserve army and the industrial active army"². It is, however, important to stress in this regard that manpower concentrated in and around the major European cities during the period of industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the process of industrialization in Africa, labour force absorption is lagging behind the rate of capital accumulation. This is because the development of the industrial sector demands imported technology, and therefore the unemployed people do not necessarily constitute an industrial reserve among.

10. Moreover, it can also be noted that the global and theoretical analysis of female employment in Africa falls within the scope of under-developed economies, which combine, pre-capitalist and imported capitalist elements. On the other hand, the household or family economy is being penetrated by limited capitalist relationships with the pre-eminence of the former relationships of personal unquestioned domination, which find their rationalization in ideological and religious considerations. Whatever the degree of dislocation in capital accumulation, it is always done at the expense of female employment, paid or unpaid. This is why the response to

² Robert Leparç, "Capitalisme et patriacat à travers l'analyse économique du travail féminin et critique de l'économie politique" No. 11-12. Edition Maspers, septembre, 1973. Paris, p. 23.

the issue of equality of men and women in employment in the underdeveloped countries is evasive, particularly since the process of "capitalization" of an underdeveloped country by means of international capital is different process from that in the industrialized societies, which are motivated by their internal dynamism. The problems of female employment do not become more specific qualitatively and quantitatively, but they regroup those of the other social classes of the social group considered.

11. The lack or paucity of statistics on female employment, the limitations of the significance and scope of the theoretical analysis of female employment should not, however, lead to pessimism or a renunciation of action in support of women both at the collective or individual levels. In this connection, the United Nations have for several years now been trying to sensitize national authorities responsible for development, to the importance of female employment, particularly in the informal sector.

12. It is for this purpose that the International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of a liberal concept of human rights, not only continues to be interested in female employment but is making considerable effort to integrate women in development in a practical way³.

13. On its part, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, through its African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) continues to assist African countries in the implementation of the recommendations of the African Regional Plan, the Mexico World Conference, the Copenhagen Programme of Action, the Lagos Plan of Action and of the forward-looking strategies of Arusha and Nairobi, and in the enhancement of the contribution of female employment to the economic development of African countries.

14. It is in this context that ECA has now been assigned the responsibility to execute a major project on the strengthening of the role of women in the informal sector-production-management.

15. This project which is financed by UNDP is being executed by the following agencies: ECA, OAL, INSTRAW, ILO and OPS. UNIFEM and UNDP are providing the funds for the component on CREDIT. The immediate objectives which relate to policies, statistics, training and credit, the main elements of the project as follows:

- To improve the policy framework and strengthen the planning capacity of governmental and non-governmental institutions through increased awareness of policy options and composite strategies aimed at a more effective participation of women in the informal sector;
- To develop appropriate approaches and techniques for statistical data collection and analysis on the participation and working conditions of women in the informal sector in Africa, to assist policy makers;

³ Late-Rah, ILO and the issue of female employment in Africa during the United Nations Women's Decade, 1975.

- To identify and disseminate appropriate policy options and strategies for training and technical assistance in support of self-employment, establishment of enterprises and expansion of economic activities, including efficient mechanisms for implementation, for the benefit of informal sector women.
- To identify and develop efficient credit systems for the deprived women in the informal sector.

I. INFORMAL SECTOR VERSUS UNDERGROUND ECONOMY

16. All through the economic history of human societies, informal sector activities have existed under widely varied appellations. However, the informal sector has gained renewed attention since the 1970s, because of the work of researchers, many of whom are engaged by ILO. The concept itself is not new as A. Sauvy⁴ points out. The terminologies show the variants of the concept: invisible, clandestine, concealed, independent, industrial, ghost, marginal, informal employment, or again hidden, underground, parallel, secondary, pluralist economy, twilight employment, and informal employment.

17. The Carthaginians brought in wine and materials from Cyrenaica in Egypt and the Romans smuggled slaves by clothing them in white toga to avoid paying the prescribed duties. In France, the period after the battle of Jena in 1806, when Napoleon banned the importation of goods from England, was the peak of contraband activities, claims Sauvy. "A common occurrence", if one dare to say so, was the possession of double papers, one for the English and one for the guards. A whole lot of people at the ports and within the country made some profit out of illicit trade. Even the government itself, did not hesitate, on some occasions, to procure products that were needed for the war⁵.

18. In England, informal sector activities are linked with the concepts of "black, cash, concealed, dual, informal, moonlighting, hightening, twilight, underground, hidden, illicit, unofficial, unobserved economy".

19. In Germany, the German miracle owes much to moonlighting; in the U.S.A., it is referred to as "underground economy" or "subterranean economy;" in Sweden, the clandestine economy evades the established system of taxation and controls; in Italy, it is the submerged, underground economy; in Spain, which serves as a transition zone for the clandestine labour force coming from countries in the south and heading towards the north, government officials operate in the parallel economy although it remains hazy, still not well known.

⁴ A. Sauvy "Le Travail Noir" et "L'Economie de Demain-Caman Levy, Paris, 1984, p. 297.

⁵ Op. cit. p. 24 and following.

20. In the socialist countries, informal activities take place in the form of side employment, through the "charbonni", black workers. This means that almost everywhere in the world, economic development, more specifically, capital accumulation has been accompanied by a "twilight zone", where informal activities take place. Given the variety of locations where these activities are conducted particularly the various of forms in which they occur, and the process of their development in society, it is difficult for researchers to define the informal sector. Whatever the case, in Africa, compared to the international economy, all forms and variants of informal activities, ranging from trafficking in currency and imported goods to tax fraud can be found within the peripheral economies.

21. African women form the largest majority of operators in the informal sector through their various forms of commercial activities in a wide range of products, both agricultural and industrial products.

22. Women's activities in the informal sector are conducted within two types of enterprises: hidden micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized hidden enterprises, which sometimes could be made legal either at the individual or at the collective level. It is by this means that female traders of Mali became pioneers in the marketing of Malian mangoes in Senegal: during the mango season, the women rented wagons from the Dakar-Niger Railway and then flooded the Dakar markets with large quantities of mangoes. This activity was taken up by the "Office national des produits du Mali" (ONPM) (the National Bureau for Malian Products). However, the poor functioning of the state enterprise has left a gap for the women, who still operate sporadically in that market. What this means is that apart from the small-scale subsistence activities, the women also engage in large-scale activities, which remain usually informal even after the operators have satisfied the administrative procedures often related to the transportation of their goods. As such, it would probably be appropriate to define the informal sector as a privileged sector for income-generating activities, fragmented, heterogeneous or homogenous activities in small and medium-sized enterprises, which are obscure, invisible, but able to support an underground economy, whose resources can be tapped for development. We are deliberately proposing this definition because it encompasses a larger number of activities carried out by women and which are highly significant in terms of development. The definition constitutes a first-stage analysis of the problem of the employment of African women in the informal sector, on the basis of which other definitions could be examined.

23. Consequently, the question that arises is what the possibilities, and conditions of an underground economy in Africa are, and the relations between the subterranean economy and industrialization. In other words, the prospects for economic development in Africa in relation with the informal sector.

24. In the case where a link is established between these two realities, "the subsystem called the informal sector appears to be an essential component of the peripheral industrialization model. It is a kind of subterranean economy which serves as a factor of stability and of social integration into a process of development, which cannot be the same as that of the industrial societies. In this sense,

the informal sector is in a functional relationship with the peculiar forms of accumulation in the Third World⁶.

II. ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

25. As already stated above, the activities of informal sector women are many and varied. In the rural area, in addition to agricultural production and market gardening activities, they are also involved in many other handicrafts activities, including dyeing, pot making, weaving, basket making, trading activities, to cite only a few. Trading activities in the rural areas deal mainly with by-products from the processing of agricultural produce as well as manufactured basic goods. These activities are carried out both from home and at simple rural markets and semi-urban or urban markets directly for consumers and sellers⁷.

26. In the urban areas, informal sector activities, at present, deal with a much wider range of activities, because of the consumption pattern of urban dwellers and the availability of wider range of products in the cities.

27. Some of the informal sector activities carried out by the women have a high employment-generating capacity, particularly the commercial activities. However, activities in the rural areas have a low productivity, almost to the point of concealing a situation of underemployment and unemployment.

Who are the female operators in the informal sector?

28. Any African woman, no matter who she is, is a potential informal sector operator: peasants as well as female educators, teachers, high-level government officials or wives of diplomats. Although for some women, informal sector activities represent a source of livelihood, for some, they are only a means of "quick" accumulation of substantial resources to meet an urgent need. African women do not only travel to capital cities in Africa to market their goods and to import others, they also go to London, Rome, New York, New Delhi, Jeddah, and Hong Kong in search of industrial goods to sell on the local market.

29. Most of the women are self-employed but it also appears that some are only "messengers" of their spouses or other relatives holding high positions in their countries and who do not wish to be identified.

30. Concerning the level of education and management training as well as the conduct of the commercial activities of the people, it is commonly accepted that the low level of income of informal sector women is the result of their low level of education and knowledge of economics. The success registered by women in Cote d'Ivoire, Penin, Togo, Zaïre and Cameroon, to mention a few, contradict the analysis of the issue along these lines.

⁶ Moises Ikonioff - op. cit p. 238.

⁷ Fatoumata Agnes Diarra, "Commercialisation des produits vivriers" dans the Lekie report. ECA-1975.

37. As before, that serious and ongoing study of the issue could help define the mechanisms for enhancing women and providing specialized training for them in the area of their commercial activities. In comparison we were able to arrive now the knowledge that such activities are the backbone of the household market and information on the policies on their activities. Most of the women are very young and have no skills and some self-employment could be an alternative for them. They had dropped out of school very early. What was reported to them was a low level of education but rather their ability to deal with the market in order to obtain information in an economic order to avoid making mistakes from them, and much less the restrictive policies imposed by the government against them.

38. "The informal sector" or if you prefer the term, "the large business-man/performer" should be taken into account as an organization from the outside and from within because it is the only one in the country that is currently present. It is considered as an area of activity and a source of employment for success among the women. The lack of understanding, ignorance or contempt of this reality can thus be blamed for the failure of a large number of projects embarked upon to improve the situation of the women. However, it is not easy to do. The situation could change dramatically because of the large number of female school leavers who have been forced into unemployment after their secondary education. These groups of people are increasingly becoming integrated in the informal sector and creating their own skills on the basis of a little more traditional mechanical work.

39. The earnings of African women operators in the informal sector are variable. It has been estimated that, for example, the technicians who work in the informal sector earn less. The type of sector in which they work plays a decisive role in determining their earnings, since the technology used and capital invested by the workers varies among them.⁵

40. The private sector of support to informal sector women is still a relative unknown. In view of the situation in the informal sector, it is not clear what is to be done. Few organizations are presently functioning and support the activities of the informal sector, in order to play an active role in supporting the sector. A few private organizations might be able to obtain financial resources from the government in the near future, provided they are able to develop self-help methods of direct and indirect investigation.

41. Although it is difficult to measure the economic role of informal sector operators, it is clear that they have been successful in that they have all managed to survive. It is not clear how they have managed to do so. The fact is that they have been able to survive in a very difficult situation and the fact is that they have been able to survive in a very difficult situation and the fact is that they have been able to survive in a very difficult situation.

⁵ See, for example, the following sources: (a) informal sector: a review of activities from developing countries (ILO, Geneva, 1980); (b) ...

Problems

36. The problems faced by African women in their informal sector activities may be grouped into two categories:

- Structural problems, inherent in the informal sector, itself; and
- Problems related to the prejudices about the status of women in contemporary African societies.

Status of women and prejudices

37. In all cultural societies, women are the subject of firmly rooted prejudices. African societies are no exception to this rule. The results of this is that African women face many difficulties which derive from mere prejudices rather than from observations based on concrete evidence. These prejudices are of two types: latent prejudices and actualized prejudices:

- The latent prejudices consist of existing stereotypes as a result of which "the human mind operates in a binary manner by attributing to women qualities and weakness, not attributed to men, while qualities and shortcomings not associated with women are attributed to men"⁹d.
- The actualized prejudices relate to stalling attitudes and behaviour which have no other result than to prevent female employment from being profitable, to prevent women from being visible where they should be and at the right time. The disdain shown by planners towards female workers rebounds on the female producers of agricultural produce, whereas a close look at the activities of female peasants points to good judgement, skill, experience and obvious qualities of management and organization¹⁰. This observation is equally valid for women in other professional categories.

Structural problems

38. There are many structural problems which result in women being left unaccounted for in statistical analysis, in policies and in strategies for the development and promotion of the informal sector, in particular. The main problems are as follows:

⁹ Andre Michel, *Non aux stéréotypes vaincre le sexisme dan les livres pour enfants et manuel scolaire?* UNESCO 6- Paris. 1986-113 pages, p. 18.

¹⁰ Andre Michel, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

10. Lack of adequate policy framework and a sustained strategy of human resource utilization

35. As already stated above, policies on human resource utilization in Africa are inadequate. Where they exist, they are of a temporary nature, which means that they seriously affect the overall employment situation and the informal sector as well. Similarly, laws and regulations hardly correspond to the daily realities of individuals, particularly regarding professional identity, location of activities, access to means of production, payment of taxes, etc.

11. Lack of adequate savings and credit systems

36. The deficiencies faced by informal sector women in the area of credit are very often overlooked but only in a somewhat limited manner. In fact, at present, African countries do not have enough credit and savings institutions, the financial network is fragile, financial institutions are limited in many urban areas, and even in the cities they are only available at the commercial centres. This means that, at present, there are no facilities to assist African women to familiarize themselves with the financial system in order where they live. For instance, if one wants to go to the bank, it possibly entails "making a whole journey," whereas in the industrialized world, there are as many banks as there are petrol stations. Savings banks of various size exist in the same area. Moreover, the meetings where informal commercial activities are intensively conducted are often far away from the financial institutions, not only from the administrative point of view but also from the social perspective. Nothing of very little in the daily order of things encourages financial organizations to do so, whereas it would have been more profitable to develop a special and flexible credit network for families, accompanied by introduction to savings through insurance systems. The policy of household savings institutionalization would not be a realistic one.

37. There is no progression in the volume of household savings and the overall rate of domestic savings. This implies the adoption of other complementary measures to stimulate households to existing links between savings-consumption patterns.

38. Transfer an increasingly large proportion of cash holdings into institutional savings.

39. Furthermore, since each country most often has a credit and savings system, detailed studies should be undertaken on these issues in order to define means of assisting individuals to finance the expenditures incurred in the running of their enterprises, within their own budgets.

12. Absence of sustained support programmes for women

40. The level of training and of interest of most female informal sector operators both in the local and in foreign language is so low that they training in and introduction to management techniques. The level of resources allocated to research and education for the organization practical training suited to the living conditions of the women concerned is very low. For such a programme to be

effective, it is necessary first of all, for planners to be conversant with the commercial and financial system of the informal sector women, and then find ways of improving it. Any other approach which ignores the primary importance of the mental capacities of African women and substitutes anything else for it will only have limited success.

Lack of support structures for informal sector women

42. Informal sector women, particularly street sellers, need support structures in the form of sheds with stalls where they can sell their goods. Apart from well-equipped city markets, always with limited space, the Municipal authorities do not take the trouble to provide the facilities that informal sector women need. From time to time, one sees a disturbing spectacle on the streets of African cities, whereby street sellers, sometimes women carrying their young children are chased off the streets. Such chases often lead to substantial losses for the sellers, who are also fleeced mercilessly by tax collectors.

43. Informal sector activities are often set up at home, the location varies with the nature of enterprise. This is done in order to evade various types of taxes, but more importantly to avoid having to pay rent on the business premises and other attendant recurring expenditure.

Insufficient, even lack of resources

44. Women who engage in commercial activities often do so with monies given by or lent them by a relative. Such resources become more significant as the women have no access to credit because of current regulations which require the husband to guarantee the wife's loan. As such informal sector women have very limited funds at their disposal. In addition to their income-generating activities, the women also have to make many other expenditures on the family. In the end, the remainder of the money is often not enough for developing the enterprise.

Absence of the women concerned in the political arena

45. The absence of informal sector women from spheres of political decision making is an issue which is considered as important, but not always accorded its full weight. Through the female wings of political parties, some groups of women can rise to positions of decision making. However, because of their inadequacies, resulting from their lack of technical experience, they are not always able to present their problems in the right context, in such a manner as to push for the adoption of policies and strategies of benefit to a larger proportion of informal sector women, who are invisible, but whose contribution to national production is clearly obvious. It should be emphasized, on the other hand, that it is difficult for the women to ensure the follow-up of the political decisions affecting them because they do not remain in their official positions for long. This mobilization also impedes programming and dissemination of actions already taken, creating the impression of continuously repeating claims and recommendations which stand no chance of being implemented.

42. Finally, it should also be noted that although there are no restrictive laws preventing the women from attaining and remaining in positions of decision making, there are the various other specifically detailed their presence at such positions.

Policy implications and the role of the state in developing economies

43. By not seeing the relevance of employment policies in Africa, one can explain to some extent why possible opportunities by which the informal sector can be integrated or developed. The main problem which the development policy will be an employment policy. If one is to try to develop a policy of assistance aimed at formalizing the informal sector, it is to be an employment policy aimed at creating a limited number of jobs for women workers, or it is rather to be an employment policy which would involve the state at all times, whatever the social group considered, whether men or women.

44. Suppose one tried to do something, for example, to provide support for an employment policy based on assistance to the informal sector. This would imply the creation of a policy of economic financing and/or of institutions operating with mixed funds, mostly from domestic resources and complemented with external financing, or in the context of some a regional system, the realization of this institutional fabric would be a long process. The selection of small- and medium-sized enterprises to be supported, similar to what is done in India, when such resources are scarce, will be the right of women having access to them. Even though the majority of large men and women were benefiting from such institutions, the state is not going to support them for various reasons not to be explained. In any case, defining the criteria for the selection of women's activities to be supported, it is believed that the diversity, heterogeneity of the informal sector activities engaged in by the women could be a major stumbling block which is not to be overcome. This however, should not constitute an obstacle to the creation of women and official policies. In any case, the relevant action will inevitably lead to the formalization of the informal sector through those enterprises which show good prospects for production, capital accumulation and acquisition of a wage employees, even if from the psychology of entrepreneurs one can be certain that at one stage or other in the development of their enterprises, they will recruit more family labour. In other words, in the case of institutional credit assistance, the development of the enterprises is weakened by the attitudes and behaviour of entrepreneurs. A possible solution would perhaps be the extension of the informal credit system, which is still not well known in Africa.

45. Assistance to the informal sector should be conceived as a comprehensive package, with its own networks and mechanisms of operation, so as to prevent bottlenecks in its implementation.

46. The orientation of the employment policy towards the creation of a restricted salaried class, should be accompanied by policy measures on the legal framework, as well as an educational apparatus and a system social advantages. It happens that African countries which are at present, avaged by economic crisis, cannot fully institute such a welfare state system. The informal sector, therefore, becomes the outlet for those whom the employment policy have not taken into account.

51. Obviously, if the use of female labour for domestic tasks were to be accompanied by social advantages, the women would be happy and it would help them to improve the living conditions of their families. However, this will not be the ultimate solution as far as development progress is concerned.

52. When employment policy becomes ad hoc, government policies are geared more towards the control of food prices or towards the support of the industrial sector or wholesale trading. The approach to the problem is based on macro-economic reasoning. However, the macro-economic approach, although vital, cannot take account of the social and sociological reality in Africa, particularly that the power structure, cultural values, organization and regulations. "Economic development goes beyond increasing value added and it could be defined as a process of structural changes leading to a lasting increase in national production, or as a process of changes of the social relations corresponding to a release, a mobilization for the purpose of productive accumulation and ... to an increase in productivity and its distribution within a given environment"¹⁴. This brings to light the change in organization and management. For this reason, the development strategies defined at national level could also be extended to the regional level. Thus, a strategy conceived at national level for rural female informal sector operators could perhaps have a wider impact if it is applied to a larger subregional or regional economic space. It also follows that the macro-economic approach to informal sector employment should not only be associated with a micro-economic approach, but also be linked to the economic environment, and of course to the economic operators, including women.

53. Whatever the response given the problem of the relation between the informal sector and development, it should be observed that the dissipation of the clandestine nature of the informal sector, calls for its formalization to a certain extent. In fact, to prevent the harassment which the female informal sector operators are subjected to, it would be necessary to officially acknowledge their existence by giving them an identity, professional identity cards, for instance. Such action should be accompanied by measures which enable them to legally set up their businesses in various locations. Besides, measures could also be taken by government departments to supply the informal sector operators with raw materials, at least those raw materials for which the enterprises show promising prospects of promoting production and income.

54. To speed up the promotion of women's informal sector activities, it would be appropriate, through well-designed educational and cultural programmes, to reduce, even end, the numerous social prejudices against women. This is all the more important as inequalities exist between men and women at all levels of production and commercial activities. In this connection, we said some years ago that:

¹⁴ P. Huguon et O. Sundrie in "La crise de la Planification africaine", *La Revue Tiers Monde* vol. XXVII no. 110, Paris 1978, p. 130.

- "while prices are fixed for the commercial products of husbands on the world market, the foodstuff produced by women and their participation in commercial agriculture bring no financial reward;
- while the wage employment of husbands on large plantation are often defined in quantity of work, the hours women put into the peasant domestic economy, the hours devoted to the four-fold production activities (involving household duties, food crop cultivation, cash crop production and marketable products sold on the local markets) are defined, as indicated in the study, as time-budget;
- while the wage or own account employment of husbands are accompanied by social benefits, in some countries, these same advantages are denied women, in the name of a bourgeois paternal family system in which the woman is supposed to be a 'housewife'¹².

55. One of the means of providing an "honourable exit" from the clandestine informal sector for women, is therefore to formalize it. It remains to find out how the women can then have direct access to it. More importantly, an investigation should be conducted to determine how far governments are willing to specifically promote measure which are helpful to informal sector women, particularly with regard to taxation, various local rates and supplies.

Conclusions

56. After the political authorities have made their socio-economic choices, the question that will remain is whether the economic activities of the women should be conducted on individual basis or in groups. Whatever the solution adopted, the promotion of small-sized individual or collective enterprises should be an integral part of it.

57. There should, therefore, be the resolute will to assist the women to anticipate, plan, think about and manage, not only their businesses but also the affairs of the nation. In other words, a constant effort should be made to promote the access of women to activities hitherto reserved for men and improve the traditional areas of activity. The rural-urban gap should also be bridged. This in no way means that cities should be made rural or rural urban. What it means is the creation of a wide range of possibilities, which are flexible and operational as well as profitable for female informal sector operators in both urban and rural areas. One can well imagine the priority objectives of African informal sector operators to be the following:

- Recognition of their identity and reinforcement of their position on the markets;
- Promotion and development of their enterprises;

¹² Fatoumata Agnes Diarra, "Rôle des sexes dans les communautés méditerranéennes et en Afrique", Sociologie Contemporaine 1977 vol 23, pp. 393-420.

- Eradication of the prejudices and mistrust between informal sector women and government institutions;
- Finally, to ensure that economically active women are increasingly productive and grow in numbers in each African country.